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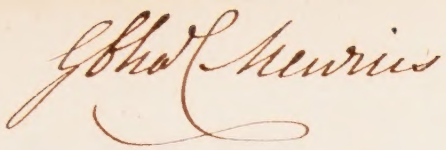

SIX WEEKS

AT

LONG'S.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

SIX WEEKS

AT

LONG'S.

BY

A LATE RESIDENT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

"LONGO *ordine gentes.*"

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SIX WEEKS

AT

LONG'S.

CHAPTER XV.

AS the entertainment was expected to be of a conversational nature, every one felt the necessity of talking, and therefore no one could summon courage enough to begin. Not so Miss Chariot. She had rehearsed her part already; and as this was not her first appearance on any stage, she at once boldly dashed into her part.

"I rather think," said she, from the centre of the room, where she had contrived to place a chair, and raising her voice to public pitch, "that we are a congregation of quakers, instead of cognoscenti. It often astonishes me, why, in this country, people are less inclined to talk than in France or Italy. Some persons account for the circumstance by saying that the cloudiness of our atmosphere and the grossness of our food render us phlegmatic and taciturn. But this is a mistake. When a carpenter wants good tools, he cannot do good work. When a nation has not a conversational language, it cannot excel in conversation. Dipthongs, tripthongs, gutturals, and the letter *s*, have deprived our mother tongue of

oral auricularity, and marred the social interchanges of sweet sentiment.

"The chief and fatal fault of our language is the number of consonants which clash in it. This was not so much the case with it formerly; but the moderns, instead of softening, have roughened the dialect. The old *alway*, for instance, is far superior to the modern *always*. The old *fro* is less objectionable than the modern *from*; and the old *ne* has infinite advantage over the modern *nor*."

"Then I presume, Madam, you are an admirer of *Ney*," said Little.

"*Neigh* away, Sir," retorted Miss Chariot; "though the phrase *bray* away might suit you better."

"I submit," returned Little. "The

grey mare is certainly the better horse."

"Now," continued Miss Chariot, "I will ask any man with a respectable ear whether *between* is not far before *betwixt*."

"As you have spoken the sentence," said Little, "I think it *is* before; but you might have put it behind without any detriment?"

"There you are out, Sir," cried Miss Chariot.

"I wish, with all my soul, I *was* out," retorted Little, looking significantly at the door.

Miss Chariot thought she had gained the victory, so went on with her disquisition.

"Now I have thought of an easy

way, by which, in a very few years, custom would enable us to speak the English language in such a manner as would make it at once elegant, expressive, and harmonious. It is merely by making the terminations of the adjective and substantive, in plural and singular number, agree together, on the principle of the Latin tongue. But you will, perhaps, comprehend me better by hearing a specimen. For this purpose I shall recite a passage of the Spectator, in the improved language which I would propose:

"Whena I waz ato Grando Cairo, I picked up several Orientala manuscripta, whica I have still by me. Among othera, I met with oné entitulea 'Thea Visiona of Mirza,' whica

I havé redd ové with great pleasuré. I intend to givé it to the publico, when I havé no other entertainmento fo them, ando shall begin with the first visione, whico I havé translaten, wordo fo wordo, as followeth.

"Now," continued Miss Chariot, "I trust I need not descant upon the advantages derivable from this mode of grammaticising our language; and I think I shall have influence enough to persuade the whole nation to be of my opinion. I would propose that every schoolmaster should be compelled by act of parliament to instruct his scholars in this way, and that a regular law should be passed, requiring all persons under the age of forty to adopt it."

The titter, which had with some difficulty been suppressed during this extraordinary harangue, now broke out into an unrestrained peal of laughter. Let not our readers, however, suppose Miss Chariot was confounded. No, that was a feeling, which, happily for her, she did not possess; but seeing Lord Leander among the scoffers, she fixed on him instantly, and exclaimed:

"So, my lord, notwithstanding your printed promises, that you would not write again for several years, I find the *cacoëthes scribendi* has not yet deserted you. Why do you not compose an epitaph on the death of your bear?"

"Which I can publish after your death, Madam," answered his lordship, "and thus make it answer two purposes."

"I have written some lines on the death of a favourite ape," said Perriwinkle, "a most interesting creature, who was developing prodigious powers of sagacity and human intellect, when the *everlasting* sleep seized him. If you please, I will repeat them to the company."

All present testified the pleasure they should experience at hearing them. This is a common and most useful custom in society, for, if people are pleased at whatever they hear, nay, declare that they will be pleased, without knowing at what, it follows that stupidity is one of those cements which bind man to man, and should be (which, indeed, it very properly is) cultivated with assiduity by all those

who make any pretension to taste and elegance.

Perriwinkle began thus:—

O, Ape! who diedst before thy time,
Thy hapless fate demands a rhyme,
Not such as bards to nobles give,
Who, dying, hope again to live;
And talk about a future sky,
And lift to heav'n the hoping eye;
As if that heav'n, where fain they'd go,
Was all above, and none below.
My song shall mourn th' untimely fall
Of one, who had no *ifs* at all.
Ifs are the springs that poison life;
Were there no *if*, there were no wife:
For, take from wife the *i* and *f*,
And we, (that's man) are only left!
'Tis said, that Apes at first were men,
Chang'd, for their crimes, in form, and then
That men they mimick'd; but 'tis clear,
That men to mimic them appear.

> The beaux, who chatter in the street,
> And grin at every girl they meet,
> Resemble monkies, and their shapes
> Are most excessively like apes.

"I protest to Mahomet!" exclaimed Lord Leander, starting from his seat; "I shall be quite excruciated if you repeat another line. I know well, I know well, my friend, you are only making a humorous experiment on our patience, and ——"

"Upon my soul!" eagerly interrupted Perriwinkle, "I was never more serious in my life; and if you only allow me to go on, 'tis five to one I beguile you of your tears."

"Me!" cried Lord Leander: "I never wept in my life, and if I ever do I shall owe it to an onion, not an epi-

taph. But an epitaph on an ape! Yet, I had once a bear: yes, a sweet bear! the most interesting and most shaggy animal in existence. The friends of my soul might be false—the day might be o'ercast with clouds—a stubborn stanza might mock the ingenuity of my brain—but my faithful bear was still the same—still lovelily uncouth, still endearing in its ruggedness. Oh, ye golden hours of my early adolescence, shall I? must I? can I?"

"No, you can't," cried Perriwinkle; "you can't get on if you were to be shot for it. You have interrupted me in the midst of my ape, and you have brought a huge bear upon the carpet which has muzzled you completely."

"Nay, gentlemen," said the Coun-

tess de Waltz, "we must not talk of apes and bears before angels. Has no one an epigram, or an apologue, or a moral tale, or a charade?"

"I have a parody on an epigram, written by Lord Leander," said Miss Chariot, "which I shall begin our literary *pic-nic*, by repeating:—

EPIGRAM.—HEM!

"He, cloven-hoof'd himself, defies the Devil,
To show what wit can do, and, what an evil!"

"I have a match for it, however," said his lordship.

"Of all the acids, that were ever known,
Sure the most sharp and hateful is—car-bon."

"Come, Mr. Morland," said the countess, "we have not heard your

voice yet. Pray, favour us with something—an apologue, or a tale."

"Your ladyship shall have an apologue," answered Morland. "A king had condemned one of his slaves to death. The slave, in the anguish of his despair, knew no bounds, but abused the prince, his master, with the most bitter reproaches. 'What does he say?' said the monarch to his favourite, who stood near the slave. 'Sire,' answered the favourite, 'he says that the golden gates of Paradise open of themselves to the merciful, and he intreats your forgiveness with the most prostrate supplications.' 'I grant him forgiveness,' said the king.

"A courtier, who had been a long time the enemy of the favourite, had

heard the real words of the slave. 'You are grossly deceived, Sire,' said he to the monarch; 'that wretch reviles you in the most bitter terms.' The king answered, 'the lie is the lie of humanity; thy truth is the truth of cruelty.' Then, turning to his favourite, he said: 'Oh, my best friend, thy words SHALL be the truth.'"

"Truth!" exclaimed Lord Leander: "there is no such thing as truth. There may be *fact*, but there is not *truth*. Truth signifies a belief, or the knowledge of fact; and what two witnesses ever related a fact in a similar manner?"

"And now, young lady," said the countess, addressing herself to Hypolita, "will you do us the favour to

entertain the company with some witty remark, or apt story?—Do, my dear."

The countess had heard of Hyppolita's supposed imbecility of mind, and wished to amuse the company with a display of it. Every one, who was acquainted with the same report, looked with a smile towards Hyppolita, who politely declined acceding to the request.

"Nay, I beg you will oblige us," said one. "Pray do," said another. "Poor thing! she can't," said Mrs. Coulter. "I must not be refused," said the countess.

"What am I to do?" whispered Hyppolita to Morland.

"If you have any thing apposite in your recollection," replied he, "and are not resolved against persevering in

your fictitious character, you will infinitely oblige me, by astonishing these people."

"I believe I must then," said she. "For, to say the truth, I am quite tired of playing the fool; so, if they ask me again, I am at their service."

She was asked again.

"As a literary trifle of some kind or other appears to be expected from every one," said she, "I am anxious not to appear singular in refusing my mite, poor as it is."

"You!" cried Mrs. Coulter. "What, you? Mercy on me! if ever I heard the likes. Why, gentlemen and ladies, sure you won't let her. She'll expose herself; she's a natural. Lord bless me!"

"Pray," cried the countess, "do

not hinder the young lady. I intreat you, Madam, let us have her trifle. Were it only for the pleasure of studying the human mind, and hearing what odd and disjointed ideas a person not favoured by Nature may possess, do not refuse us. I ask it, for the interests of philosophy. There are ethical and metaphysical men in the room, who would derive as much delight from the specimen as a chemist would from the mixture of matter, without affinity."

"Well," said Mrs. Coulter, "she shall say what she pleases. One good thing is, she can't make a fool of herself, for she is one already."

Hyppolita was then called upon, and began thus:

"His lordship has asserted that there is no such thing as truth: and, though I agree with him to a certain extent, I cannot but think he carries the theory too far. I will, therefore, relate a circumstance which occurred to Sir Walter Raleigh, and which shows that a belief of this kind may induce a man to act with rashness and folly. Sir Walter, when confined in the Tower, had prepared the second volume of his history for the press. He was one day standing at the window of his apartment, and saw underneath it one man strike another, who, by his dress, he judged was an officer, and who, drawing his sword, ran the assailant through the body, who, however, did not fall till he had knocked down the

officer. The officer was instantly seized, and carried away by the servants of justice, while the body of the murdered man was borne off by some persons, apparently his friends.

"Next day an acquaintance of Sir Walter called on him. Raleigh happened to mention yesterday's fray; but what was his astonishment, when his friend told him that he was totally mistaken in the whole story; that the supposed officer was no officer, but a servant of a foreign ambassador; that this servant gave the first blow; that he did not draw his sword, but that the other drew it, and ran its owner through the body; and that, after this, a foreigner in the mob knocked the murderer down, in order to prevent

his escaping. 'Sir!' said Raleigh, 'allow me to say, that though I might be mistaken as to the man's being an officer, I am certain as to the other facts, because I saw them. They happened on that spot opposite, where you see a stone of the pavement a little raised above the rest.' 'Upon that very spot,' said his friend, 'did I stand during the whole affair, and can protest to you solemnly that you are totally mistaken.' 'Then, how many falsehoods must be here!' said Raleigh, taking up the manuscript of his history. 'If I cannot judge of an event which passes under my own eyes, how shall I truly narrate those which have passed thousand of years before my birth? Truth! I sacrifice to

you.' And, as he spoke, he threw his manuscript into the fire.

"Now," continued Hyppolita, "it strikes me, that had Lord Leander's theory been true to its full extent, the way that Sir Walter's friend told the story could not be true either; and, in that case, there would have been double reason for the destruction of the manuscript. And a casuist, or a sophist, might add, that his lordship, in asserting that there is no such thing as truth, disproves his own assertion; for he himself contends for the existence of one truth, at least, namely, that there is no truth whatever. If there be no truth whatever, his lordship's statement, as well as Sir Walter's, must be false. So now, my lord,

having placed you, as the logicians say, in the two horns of a dilemma, I shall take the liberty to leave you there."

It would be difficult to describe the astonishment of all those who had believed Hyppolita an idiot, when she concluded her remarks. Even Mrs. Coulter opened her mouth and eyes, half suspecting that she had heard good sense; but as good sense was not her forte, she would not venture to decide upon the present occasion. When we cannot take out a license from nature, we have no way of qualifying ourselves from art.

"Have you travelled much, Ma'am?" abruptly said Lord Valence, who, by the way, had now just attained unto

the dignity of an earldom, under the title of the Earl of Rat-eater.

"I have merely been in the East Indies," returned Hyppolita.

"The very thing I wanted!" said his lordship to himself. "Then, if the company pleases, I will contribute my share to the entertainment of this evening by the recitation of an Oriental tale."

Every one was on the alert at this proposition, and a universal murmur of approbation announced to the noble earl their eagerness to hear him. He thus began:

"The hermit Handouin had a long beard, and also great chagrin towards all mankind, though he had never seen the millioneth part of them in his life,

and even knew not that Nova Scotia or New Holland were in existence. But he judged of them as sailors judge of the sea: if they find in it one monstrous wave, they conclude that they shall also find another at its heels, and so on, another and another, from the Land's End to Boston. This, however, is as great a lie as any man need wish to hear told, because the Atlantic is sometimes as smooth as a lake. However, certain it is, that the hermit Handouin went home one day, particularly out of temper at nothing that had happened, and at first amused himself in a harmless manner by calling up the subterranean gentleman to confound and consume all nations, known or unknown. But it is fatiguing enough

to abuse people one has never heard of; so the hermit Handouin fell asleep. A hermit, I must tell you, never sleeps without dreaming: his soul, according to Locke, makes an excursion from his body; and after having seen the finest and funniest sights you can imagine, pops snug into the body again, just as it is about to awake; something like servants, who know their masters' hours; or, like Lord Elder, who steals down the area steps when he is afraid his lady should scold him for being out so late.

"This hermit had his regular dream of course. He imagined himself transported to a solitude, remote from the follies and vices of mankind; for you must know already that mankind have

follies and vices. He walked about slip-shod, in a large forest, and thought himself quite secure there, from the caprices of life.

"The sun arose. His rays gilded the verdure, illumined the atmosphere, and did a great many other things which it would be too tedious to mention. One fact, however, I must not pass over, which is, that the birds began to sing, and that their feathers were of various colours.

"All of a sudden Mahomet lent the hermit the power of understanding the several dialects of these birds, and certainly it was a great treat to him. The eagle was busy railing at the owl on her weakness of sight; and the owl, who knew nothing of those noto-

rious oculists, Mr. and Mrs. Williams, thought her case a bad one. The turtle-dove spoke very ill of the hawk, who, in his turn, sneered, as well as a bird could sneer, at the weakness of the turtle-dove. The blackbird was extremely jocose on the cry of the eagle; the jay and the magpie mocked each other; both, however, united in ridiculing the funereal colour of the crow, and the goldfinch assured his friends, that, though he would not wish to be thought invidious, he must say that the sparrow had a vulgar look: he did not dress his feathers fashionably, and he carried his tail too cockish.

"There suddenly descended from Mahomet a most charming apparition. It was a youth, whose colour resembled

rose leaves sprinkled over snow by some playful virgin of Circassia, while she is peeping under her arm at her lover, lest he should come on her unawares, and be as rude as she would wish. The wings of this apparition were of the most delicate azure, and their edges were streaked with gold, as the beams of the morning streak the sky. His locks were black as midnight. His eyes were blacker than a hundred midnights. In a word, he was a fine subject for simile and metaphor. You would have supposed that he came down for no other purpose than to set poets about making comparisons; but you would have supposed wrong. He alighted on the highest leaf of a plane tree, whose loftiness

surpassed the cedars of the forest by many inches. He called the different tribes of birds by their names. They obeyed, and came perching round him in a terrible perspiration. They expected no less than to be roasted for supper. He spoke:

"Hear, ye winged tribes, what Mahomet reveals unto you. Ye are all equal in merit;—ye only differ in qualities, because ye are destined to different functions."

"Thou, the eagle, art born for war; thy cry, discordant and strong, cannot have harmony. The owl could not catch reptiles and insects, if her eyes, of minute and nocturnal vision, could withstand the meridian sun. The nightingale and blackbird are of delicate and puny habits of body,

because stoutness is incompatible with good singing—a professed singer being seldom without a cough. The turtle is made for love, the hawk for rapine, and the magpie for petty depredation. They are as useful to the earth as lovers, free-booters, and pick-pockets—three classes of people who cause a good deal of sport in the world, by filling the papers with rape, robbery, and murder! Remain, therefore, in your respective conditions, without regret. There are differences in your kinds, but no faults. You are all perfect—by Mahomet! I am not more so. The only difference is, that I am an angel bright, and you are a parcel of magpies, and such sort of gentry."

"I think," whispered the magpie to

a huge paroquet, that was clawing his beak with his toes, "I think that fellow with the blue wings has come here to insult us."

"Suppose we thrash him?" said the paroquet.

"Do," said the magpie.

"Do," said the crow.

"Do," said the eagle.

"Do," said all the birds, as they flew away.

"Do," said the paroquet himself, as he flew away after them.

The youth with the blue wings did not perceive their departure. He was busy in hunting down a flea, that had nestled in one of his feathers. He flew away too.

"His admonition was just," said the

hermit Handouin. "Shall I expect from the cadi the mildness of the courtier? from the iman the freedom of the warrior? from the merchant the disinterestedness of the sage? O, messenger of Mahomet! thy lessons shall be engraven on my heart, and my lips shall repeat them to the sons of men."

The company was greatly delighted with this interesting tale. Every one who had read Voltaire, remarked that it was certainly in his style; and every one who had not read Voltaire, said, "excessively like, indeed!"

The *petit-souper* was now announced as ready, so the company put off "the feast of reason" for a more substantial sort of diet. Accordingly, they adjourned into the supper-room, where a

neat, smoking, nic-nac, nimini-pimini collation was laid. Far be it from us to intrude our pen upon the sacred recesses of refection. Let them eat their chickens in peace. Even Croaker himself shall put an end to three partridges, and half a pie stuffed with truffles; nor shall we betray that he had supped before he went, and would sup again after his departure. Bellair too may, without our interference, declaim against the system of vegetable diet; and when asked by a lady whether he never ate any himself—reply, "Oh, yes, I remember I once ate a *pea*."

But we must insist on the privilege of bringing our ink-horn into the room after the repast is removed, and of relating the conversation that took place while the wine went round.

A song was first called for by the countess, and all eyes were directed instantly towards Little. He was not a man formed by nature to resist the fair, who, we believe, have often tried his good-nature. He therefore sang the following.

A spider a line of his net
Had drawn, from one tree to another,
And on it two sylphids had met,
Having stole from the eye of their mother.

Astride on the web they were sat,
Enjoying the morning's humidities,
When a corpulent species of gnat
Pass'd through their transparent fluidities.

"Ah! what shall I do?" said the one,
"'Tis a pity our substance so thin is;
No wonder that nymphs are undone,
By the solid assailment of guineas."

Then, oh, ye frail nymphs! I implore,
When your poet is buried and dead,
And men at your altars adore,
Think, think what the sylphids have said.

By Heaven! I would sooner cut off
The chain that hangs earth in the air,
Than break the slight web with a cough,
While the two pretty sylphids are there!

A wag now begged of Miss Chariot to favour the party with a few of her melodious tones. She required no repetition of the request, because she understood the meaning of sharp and flat, the treble key and the minor key. She began.

But, oh, ye powers of music! how were ye ground to atoms by the discordance! hog-harmony alone could be compared with it. The company were

almost out of their wits. They knew that she pretended to pharmacy, but had no notion that she undertook singing. Happily, however, they kept themselves from laughing without any accident happening: 'tis true a little girl ran suddenly out of the room, but she came back in a minute or two as well as ever.

Lord Leander was sitting next to the countess; and as it was a principle with him that every woman adored him, he in a short time began to make downright love to her. Now, as it so happened that the countess admired no man who could not dance, and as poor Lord Leander could not dance at all, he found himself to his utter astonishment making but a small pro-

gress in her affections. He talked of his tenderness—she was cold. He talked of his honour—she was indifferent. He talked of his villainy—she was disgusted.

His lordship had never experienced such a decided opposition before. He had either found women romantically attached to him, or anxious to obtain the attentions of so celebrated a character, and therefore willing to give hopes which they never meant to realize. He therefore felt quite incensed; for he considered himself an injured man, and, in the height of his indignation, threatened the countess with the thunder of his muse, and protested he would expose her to mankind in the character of a coquet as she was.

The irritable countess instantly bestowed upon him the punishment he deserved, by slapping his face.

Now it was a caprice of his lordship's always to act towards enemies and friends the very reverse of what they would naturally expect from the common nature of the human heart. But it was his lordship's great delight to seem as if his heart had been turned inside out, or upside down, or backside foremost. Whoever did him a kindness, was sure to receive an injury in return; and whoever did him an injury was certain to be compensated by a kindness. He loved to astonish, to strike, to confound, to be magnificent. He would give a beggar-woman twenty guineas just to make her stare her eyes out; and he would call this

the sublime. He would practise whole days before a glass the art of frowning; and has said that he can never consider himself happy till he can establish an habitual wrinkle between his eye-brows. It was this propensity to excite emotion which induced him to drink out of skulls newly torn from the grave! And it was the dread, lest, by growing fat, he should lose all appearance of sentiment, pathos, and philosophy, that made him continue, till lately, the practice of running ten miles a-day in seven waistcoats, two of them flannel!

The lively countess, therefore, who knew his character well, was not at all surprised when he received the slap in his face with a smile and a bow, which

were intended to be really quite fascinating.

"Well, well," said he, "I shall not make you immortal this time; but, by the way, I wish you would tell me honestly, whether you think my verses possess the power of conferring immortality on any one."

"I will be very candid with you," said the countess. "When you talk of immortality, you mean, whether they are likely to be always as popular as they are at present, and to live in the mouths of men. That they will be found hereafter, perhaps two centuries hence, in libraries, and at booksellers, is certain. Suckling, Drayton, Roscommon, Buckingham, are still extant on the shelves, and ever will

be. But we do not read them so much for pleasure as for curiosity. We hear their names mentioned by the critics, and are thus induced to peruse them. To be sincere, I am afraid your works will share their fate, and be made immortal, simply by the art of printing."

His lordship gulped a glass of wine, and then crushed it between his fingers.

"'Tis what I myself conceive of them," said he, with a hideous calmness forced into his pale face. "But do pray, dear countess, inform me what are those qualities which you conceive my poetry wants, and the absence of which seems to be so fatal to their future prosperity?"

"If I might venture to state my

opinion," answered she, "I would say, that your execution is not equal to your conception: and when I say that one never reads your poems for the sake of the poetry, that one never feels led forward, from verse to verse, by the strength, or grace, or harmony, or richness of the language, I say what must be fatal to you as a poet. Indeed, as a powerful delineator, or rather anatomizer of the human passions; as a painter of those struggles and emotions which actuate gloomy, terrible, and diabolical natures, you are almost pre-eminent. But then again, having but this solitary excellence, you are tempted, and perhaps compelled, to recur too often to it; and hence whole pages dedicated to the

portraiture of one single character, the same sentiment turned over and over again, and the same character repeatedly introduced under different names. Mystery, and a certain undefined gloominess, a personage, whose great attraction is that nobody can make out what are his qualities, or who he is; these seem your only resources. In short, I think, had you written your pieces in prose instead of poetry, you might have surpassed all our prose-writers in the terrible: but wanting the powers of the poet, you want all that renders poetry enchanting, that adds grace to horror, and that paints to the minds eye more distinctly and more beautifully than the pencil itself can paint to the real eye."

Before the countess had ended the sentence, Lord Leander was on his feet, and the next moment he had vanished from the room.

Several of the company, who had beheld the contortions of his muscles during the latter part of what the countess had said, were afraid he had taken poison. The countess, who loved a frolic in her heart, carried on the joke, and assured them that he had just confessed the fact to her; nay, that he had run out of the room to prevent her from administering an antidote. In fine, that the poor man owned to her that he was violently in love with the Lady of the Death's-head, who was lately in Paris, and that, in consequence of her cruelty,

he was determined to give himself a death's-head, by hellebore.

The company did not wonder in the least at his lordship's having been smitten with a lady who had the face of a death's-head, since he had long since shown such a penchant for skulls. They therefore cried out, with one accord, that his lordship should be instantly pursued, brought back, and compelled to swallow some preventive medicine.

Accordingly, down rushed all the gentlemen to the hall, where they found Lord Leander, frowning and foaming with rage, and tearing his great coat with the force he used in putting it on. It was as clear as the sun to the gentlemen who saw him, that he had, not only taken poison,

but strong poison too, and that nothing but an instantaneous remedy could save him. Without taking time to tell him their intentions, or to make the slightest apology, four or five of them seized him, one at each leg, and two others at his shoulders, and began to carry him back into the supper-room.

"What are you about?" cried he, kicking with much energy, but no effect. "Do you mean to murder me?"

"No, no," replied Lord Rat-eater: "we only want to save your life."

"Why, how is it endangered?" exclaimed Lord Leander.

"You have poisoned yourself, my lord," cried Little; "and we must give you an antidote."

"That we must," said Miss Chariot; for they had just borne him into the supper-room; "and I am preparing it too. The coats of the stomach must be lubricated, and a neat puke effected by stimulants. Run, one of you, for some horse-physic. I am good at pharmacy, and whatever agrees with a horse will answer for a man. The olive oil, quick. That must come first."

Miss Chariot was now in all her glory.

"What, the devil!" exclaimed Lord Leander; "what the devil in hell shall I do? — Poisoned! — I an't poisoned."

"You know you are," cried every one.

"By all the saints in the calendar, I an't," cried he.

"Poh, stuff! nonsense!" exclaimed every one.

"Now, my lord, 'tis ready," said Miss Chariot, advancing with a cruet of oil to the table on which Lord Leander was laid on his back, and held down by twenty hands.

"Will you suffer that mad woman to kill me?" exclaimed his lordship, struggling hard for his life.

"Open your mouth," said Miss Chariot, "and take this specific."

His lordship made a sudden snap at Miss Chariot's finger, which he caught fast. She shrieked loudly, and at length got away her hand. In fine, by dint of force, they poured half a

pint of oil down his lordship's throat, who bellowed, and spit, and kicked, in vain; while his persecutors, convinced they were doing a humane act, heard his cursings and revilings, without the smallest uneasiness.

A physician, who had been already sent for, now arrived, and being informed that the patient had taken poison, administered other medicines, which they were obliged again to convey, by force, down the throat of the unfortunate poet.

He was now carried up to one of the bed-chambers, quite exhausted by his struggles, and sick with the mixtures he had swallowed.

There the most violent reachings seized him; but, behold, upon a care-

ful inspection of the contents, the physician was enabled to declare positively that there was not the least appearance whatever of poison.

The countess, fearing she had carried the joke too far, was afraid to confess it was one at all, and therefore *down faced* his lordship, with the most patient and pitying appearance of politeness, while he swore vehemently that he had never mentioned a word to her about poison. The moment he was able to move, he took his departure, a wretched object, and casting such sulky looks of meditated revenge upon his tormentors, that they prognosticated nothing less than a duel, a libel, or a dinner.

The party therefore broke up, and

the lively countess danced about the room, happy at having so effectually rendered ridiculous a man who would fain have done her a much greater disservice.

CHAPTER XVI.

The next day Morland called at Coulter's, and found the family full of observations on the events of the preceding evening, and of amusing criticisms on the several characters who had figured at the countess's *convezatione.* All agreed as to its stupidity; and Hyppolita remarked, that, considering every one went there in a literary point of view, nothing could possibly be less enlightened, or more stupid, than the whole entertainment.

After this subject had been pretty well exhausted, Morland proposed

going to the exhibition at Somerset House. Accordingly, a coach was called, and the whole party adjourned thither.

Mr. and Mrs. Coulter admired some of the paintings excessively—they were so red, and so blue, and so yellow—there was nothing misty and obscure in them, like some old paintings—all was gay and exhilarating, fresh and airy. Mrs. Coulter remarked that she had once seen some old pictures in a manor-house, near Hull, which were so dark, that though some of them were meant to represent spring, and hay-making, you would imagine, from the gloominess of the tints, that the whole landscape was surrounded by a monstrous dungeon, and that

dungeon lighted by a solitary torch. Give her, she said, green grass, and sun-shine. She had no notion of using dark colours, while light ones might be had at the same expense. Coulter, himself, too, was not without his observations. He remarked, that all the faces, intended to represent pretty women, had the same set of features; that there was too much starch in their dresses, and that the shadows of their white muslins were all blue. "There," said he, "look at the ankles of that there young woman, who is a going to kill herself. My life for it, if you clap a pair of silk stockings on them, and send them up Bond Street, the people will say she has got a dropsy in her fetlocks. I remember

once seeing a picture done by some fellow that they called the Painter of Painters, one Michael somebody; and his women were all so confounded clumsy about the heels, that you would have imagined them intended for Scotch women from the Highlands. And yet the gentleman who shewed me the picture said that it was all because this said Michael designed in a grand *gusto,* or *fusto*—I forget which. Now, my idea is, that when a man undertakes to paint a beauty, he should recollect that she is not chosen for her fat, like a bullock at a fair. Zooks! a tight ankle is the most tempting thing in nature: let the owner of it fatten upwards to the hip, if she has a mind, but, d—n it, let her keep her ankle

in racing order, as to be sure all women will, if they can; but they can't. Now a painter has no trouble in life to make a slender leg; therefore, if he chooses to make a thick one, he ought to be horse-whipped for his bad taste."

In this way the good gentleman and lady ran on for some time, while Morland and Hyppolita were more judiciously remarking upon the present style of painting. They agreed that it wanted, in general, broad colouring, and strong outline; that the artist appeared more anxious to finish off a drapery well, than to place in an expressive attitude the limbs which it covered. That he seemed more studious to imitate the several sorts of linens and velvets than the different

kinds of passions and emotions;—that, if an emperor's chair and table looked as if they had been extremely well gilt, it was no matter if the emperor himself looked like a cheesemonger. Some of the artists, it appeared, piqued themselves upon their knowledge of anatomy, and the consequence was, they presented all the muscles prominent at once, though the attitude of the figure would not warrant more than half of them to be seen in a state of action; then the attitudes themselves were generally either foppish, or theatrical, instead of being natural, and, if we may use the expression, abstract; that is, they were not a representation of gestures, such as they appear in unartificial life, but such as

we see among those whose manners have been formed by the dancing-master, or whose bread has depended upon a tragedy start. And yet these are the attitudes which have been falsely denominated *picturesque*.

The party now entered one of the small rooms, which appeared almost exclusively dedicated to portraits of illustrious characters, whether heroes, courtesans, peers, pimps, legislators, or dandies. According to the plan we have adopted in this admirable work, we shall give a slight sketch of the originals, as the copies passed in review before our hero and heroine.

The first picture which presented itself was that of the departed

DUCHESS OF ANACREON.

At her outset in life she was a prominent character as a sprightly buxom lass, full of mischief, wit, and vivacity, to which might be added a certain portion of vulgarity. In the broad vernacular dialect of her country, she uttered many smart things; and, indeed, she continued so to do till her latest hour, without being over nice about *double entendre*, or what is grossly called smutty discourse.

When riding a straddle on the wall of a mill-dam, her mother warned her of her danger, and said, "Child, ye'll fa' into the water,"—"I'll be *d——d* if I do," replied the duchess.—"Haud' your tongue," rejoined the old lady, "you're aye so full of your jokes and puns."—"Well," concluded the

duchess, " at all events they can't call it *mother*-wit."

Soon after this she was married *upon* the duke; for, although this is not the way we marry on *this* side the Tweed, yet such is the name for the thing on *the other*.

In her matrimonial journey through life she was not so happy as in her broad line of mirth, and appropriate bon mot; for the lean duke got soon tired of the *bonny* duchess; and she complained that " the rocking of cradles made such a noise at the castle that she could not sleep there," purporting that his grace's promiscuous infidelities interfered with her rest, and obtruded themselves in every direction under her very *nose*.

This, we confess, was a *burning*

shame; but it did not exactly account for the hyper blush, the rubicund and *spirited* appearance of this lady's countenance. A gentleman, who said that she drank like a *Turk*, was abused for the expression, and laughed at for his inconsistence, being informed that the Mahometan faith forbids wine—"That may be," replied the person; "but I mean to allude to her excessive use of opium: besides, I have known a Jew or two who had no objection to ham; and more than one Turk, who, when in this cold clime, forgot the injunctions of *Mahommed*."

Be this as it may, her grace was very ruddy and corpulent in her middle age and later years; and, instead of the *bonny* duchess, she was yclept the *fat*

duchess, the match-making duchess, the red-faced duchess, the gambling duchess, and the walking sun fire office. She had certainly peculiar abilities for *getting off* her daughters, and making duchesses and marchionesses of them: and there are a number of curious anecdotes on the subject; but since she has at last *got off herself*, we shall say nothing more of this jocose daughter of Caledonia.

Were we to publish her *ana*, there would be no end to her *repartee*, always, however, in *the same line*. One, therefore, we shall confine ourselves to:—Her gallant son, observing how meritorious it was in the emigrant nobility to turn their talents to account in their adversity, by becoming language and

other masters, by professions and by trades, observed: "How should we do in a similar situation?" and concluded by saying, "I think I should like to make lady's garters."—"I faith," said her grace, "that would never do; for you'd be always above your business."

She, however, brought up her sons with more serious ideas of life; and, indeed, used to boast that she did not care who were ministers, as she had a son in every possible party.

The next picture which they came to was that of the departed

EMMA.

When poverty generates debt, debt is soon followed by discredit; and as it

is no longer any one's *interest* to laud, it becomes every one's inclination to abuse. This never was more strongly exemplified than in the person of the late Emma. She lived misrepresented, and she died despised: the former no one can merit, and the latter she certainly did not entirely deserve.

Of beautiful person, though low origin, it might naturally be supposed that she was exposed to much temptation. To this she accordingly fell an early victim. The vanity of being pourtrayed by painters of the first eminence, of casts of her bust, and entire person, springing from the hands of the most distinguished sculptors, must naturally have produced no small portion of self-admiration in her mind,

and could not tend to lessen her pride, much less to afford any instruction of humility.

To be the favourite object of the pencil or the chisel of the artist, and the happy theme of the poet's pen—to have her name said, sung, and engraved, were no trifling allurements to an obscure girl. To soar from the couch of fond though unlawful embrace, to the steps, we might say the share, of a throne—to be the legitimate spouse of the representative of royalty—to be the friend of crowned heads, and the idol of a hero—to support all these with becoming self-controul required no mean capacity. Nor had she a mean capacity; for, to a very excellent understanding,

sprightly conversation, and imitative turn, she added sound judgment and a very enterprising mind.

Modesty turns from the various costumes, characters, and attitudes in which she stood, sat, reclined, or reposed, to have her resemblance taken; and the history of her early connexions, the admiration of a bishop, and the delirium of love which captivated a British hero, are already detailed in the very interesting *Memoirs of her Life*, lately published.

The worst action of her life appeared to be her seeming to publish (though from real want) the miserable catch-penny letters of the hero. The real circumstances were stated *viva voce* by herself to us, and ran thus. A viper

of a creditor, who, by groveling at first, had gained an ascendency over her, heightened and maintained by the strong hold of money due, advised her to put him in possession of her papers, with a view of examining whether her life or memoirs could not be written as a means of producing some present relief to her; and having made himself master of the manuscripts, he published those very letters for his own benefit, without her further permission or concurrence, or advantage in any shape.

Some go so far as to say that it was announced as an inducement for the hero's family to pay for its suppression. If it were so, the culpability of that family is great indeed; for they should have reflected that they would *never*

have been, had not the lion fought their name into consequence and renown; and that where there are great *lights* there must be some portion of *shade*. But the language of reproach in a portion of that family was so offensive to the hero, that he sought solace and amusement where they came in the most kind and flattering forms. As for his amatory epistles, we believe it is very difficult to find compositions of this kind breathing nothing but good sense and genius; and we remember once perusing what were called *royal love letters*, which we, without hesitation, pronounced *royal nonsense*. The only expression which running over the hero's romantic effusions produced from us was to say, "Alas! poor

human nature!" and the most kind and natural sentiment which could be excited by the recital of the once-lovely subject of this short history in a feeling breast, would be to exclaim, "Alas! poor Emma!"

That "she had a tear for pity, and a hand open as day to melting charity," is recorded in many a breast abroad and at home. Nay, even in her wretched retreat, she exercised benevolence as far as her ability would permit. She had been the bosom-friend of a queen—she had been the secret agent at more than one court, and in more than one diplomatic negociation—her intelligence and active mind had enabled her to assist, whilst her admiration had induced her to animate and

encourage the efforts of the hero; yet she died in misery: her earthly remains were claimed by devouring creditors, and she was nearly refused the right of sepulture.

Friends she had few: she trusted once, however, to a *rush*, and it was not "a *reed* shaken by every breeze;" for under that name dwelt benevolence and kindness such as she never experienced elsewhere. A good and feeling duke also stepped forward to serve her with amiable solicitude, and such advice, that, had she followed it, she might have obtained some aid from government: but in the *form* in which she placed her claim it was inadmissible.

It is little known, but not less true,

that when the immortal hero prepared for action, he used to drink a small quantity of wine out of a golden cup given him by Emma, and nail her picture to the mast during the battle. May she rest in peace!

In a beautiful boudoir, and in an attitude of the ton, stood, on mimic canvas, and at full length, the exquisite

CAPTAIN KILLION.

This captain is a second Narcissus; and the only *reflection* he has, is that of his own smiling visage in his looking glass; for his is one of the fairest faces and one of the best tempered pieces of clay that ever was moulded. His only positive foible was when at Paris, to think that he was the object

of idolatry to the Parisian dames, and the terror to all husbands, brothers, and supporters of the frail fair.

Though he could change his skin like the cameleon, appearing often in six different costumes in one day, yet was he merely the slave of the most depraved and worthless of females. Whilst some retrieved *something like* a place in society by the honour of his arm, others raised their demands from being exalted in his curricle, or got into fashion by his flirting at their carriage door. The old and obsolete indulged in the dreams of youth, whilst the young and dissolute fed upon his pocket, trespassed upon his hours of repose, wasted a portion of life, and degraded a share of intellect which it

is much to be feared will never recover the shock.

To Hyppolita's great astonishment and amusement, she next beheld her old flame,

LORD CATSON,

(portrayed) from head to heel, in the real painting. Pray, reader, let us have another look at him in print.

Some years back, the names of Billingsgate, Hellgate, Newgate, and Cripplegate, were bestowed upon the family to which this noble peer belongs, and came in gradation from mother to son. It is not our task to publish their family history, and we should not again have brought forward a name which will shortly be forgotten

by all except a few dissatisfied tradesmen, were it not for its being rendered obnoxious by an act of depravity, namely, that of adopting a child for the purpose of misguiding his youth, and educating him in paths of vice unbecoming every station, ill fitted particularly to his, and which may possibly end in total ruin to the youth—the tiger we mean, as the noble lord very elegantly and feelingly names him. Can there be a worse fate prepared for one of his tender years than to witness scenes of dissipation, to learn tales of debauchery, to assist at orgies, and to share in luxuries which he can never enjoy without criminality, nor hope for after his Pseudo Patron's demise without dishonesty. When this juve-

nile Mercury, this petty *Ambasciadore de l'amore*, now employed by his lordship in these creditable and honourable missions, shall grow into bulk and clumsiness so as to vie with his prototype, he will probably lose his *effect*, and become a perfect *Ruffiano;* and when no longer found useful, will sink into poverty, or out-living his master, arrive at a period when the boxer's son will curse the hour when he accepted the peer's favour, and sincerely wish that he had been bred up an honest mechanic.

They now came to an admirable portrait of a deceased actress.

It is said that previous to this lady's connexion with a certain Duke, a

settlement was made on her, which afterwards the lover rather wished to narrow. Taking advantage not of curtain lectures, but of conversation behind the curtain, he urged reasons for this proposed economy; on which she, with her usual good nature and fun, said: "Remember I am bred to the stage, and there is—no money returned when the *curtain's* drawn up."

Few, alas! who have been at once swept from the dramatic stage, and the stage of life, have ever merited the tribute of regret, and the meed of encomium, more than this lady,—the kind-hearted woman, and excellent performer, of whom it may be said

"That tongue that set the table in a roar,
And charmed the public ear is heard no more."

Disfigured and cold is that countenance which once used to express such archness and playfulness — withered those charms which had won affection, and formed round her a circle of admirers. She died almost alone; she was buried meanly and obscurely, deserted, forgotten, and in a foreign land.

Oh! ye frail sisters, who flourish in the sunshine of power, who have been cradled in luxury, rocked in your slumbers by fondness, and lulled to rest by the accents of flattery, ye whose eyes and smiles have expanded to a multitude of adoring admirers, and whose ears have received the soft sweet poison of seduction, beware of trusting to the charm of your allurements; dread the uncertain, sudden, yet unavoid-

able moment which will break the spell of your enchantment. Oh! fly from the fascinations of fancy and of fashion—for a moment doubt the assurances of patronage and protection, and—ah! beware of the smiles of princes; put not "your trust in chariots and horses," nor in the great and proud men of the land.

After having taken a full survey of this national exhibition, the party were about leaving the place, when, to Hyppolita's great surprise, Petitoe skipped up to her, with all his wonted animation, shook her hand heartily, and said every thing that a man should say, when there is nothing to be said. He had been absent from town; he

had been at balls and dinners; he had often thought of her, and he now hoped she was well. She replied, with her usual affability, but in so different a manner to her old style of silliness, that the little man was rather astonished. But when she led the conversation to the paintings, and expressed her opinions with judgment and propriety, the little man could only leave his mouth open.

"You are alarmed at my talking like a rational animal," said Hyppolita, laughing.

"I own," replied Petitoe, "that I am—rather—surprised at your—your improvement. A town-life, dear Madam, does wonders. I always thought your—peculiarities (pardon me) pro-

ceeded from a rural one, and I felicitate you on the exchange."

Morland and Hyppolita were much diverted at his embarrassment; but in a short time he regained his usual ease, and after that appeared suddenly to recollect that he had been, a few days before, vastly enamoured of Hyppolita, and that he was in duty bound not to hurt her feelings by changing his manners.

He therefore said some of the most exotic things in nature, and then began to think of a turn in Bond Street. This, by some train of ideas, which we cannot pretend to trace, brought to his mind that he had half a dozen tickets for Lady Bab Bigback's masquerade; and as she wished to make a hand-

some flourish before he took leave, he drew them from his pocket, and begged Hyppolita's acceptance of them. She, however, refused; but Mrs. Coulter having now joined the party, and recognized Petitoe, and hearing that it was in her power to see a masquerade, that amusement which she had so often heard of, and so much wished to enjoy, she thought ceremony would be very foolish, and accordingly volunteered the acceptance of three tickets. Petitoe then offered another to Morland, who, conscious that a masquerade was not an amusement for perfect strangers, and particularly at Lady Bab's house, which several of the very worst characters are accustomed to frequent, took the ticket without hesitation.

Petitoe then tripped off humming a Spanish air, and after a short investigation of the remaining rooms, the Coulter party followed—Dorothy with her head running on the character she should assume at the masquerade; Coulter inwardly counting the number of lambs he expected to find on his return to the country; and Morland and Hyppolita engaged in a conversation, such as is usual betwixt lovers, when their tongues are running on about trifles, while their eyes are occupied in telling each other the most interesting stories.

CHAPTER XVII.

And now the great and important night of the masquerade came, and all was uproar at the west end of the town. An unceasing rattle of carriages disturbed the ears of the uninvited, torches and lamps glided by with the rapidity of lightning, while several young gentlemen, who thought they ought to have been asked, found out that a masquerade was, after all, but a silly sort of amusement, and that a few turns in the green-room were worth a thousand such spectacles.

Hyppolita had at length determined

to go in the character of the lady with the death's head, for which purpose she had procured a mask resembling a skull. This was ornamented with a wreath of artificial primroses and violets, while her dress shone with a profusion of costly stones; and her shape, which was exquisitely fine, appeared to great advantage, by the simplicity of her drapery. Morland personated her guardian, and was attired in the costume of a Livonian Jew. Coulter and his wife were content to represent a couple of domestics, who had travelled in the train of her death's headship.

This party, by the advice of Morland, did not enter the room till twelve o'clock, when he supposed the chief

masqueraders would have expended all their humour, and much of their spirits. At twelve, therefore, they made their appearance; and he found his conjectures perfectly verified. They had hardly got inside the door, when the phænomenon of the death-faced lady began to excite instantaneous curiosity and interest. The crowd pressed round her: Persians, clowns, princesses, poets, and watchmen, were all hustling each other indiscriminately, in order to obtain a nearer view of the forbidding apparition.

The party proceeded with some difficulty to the upper end of the room, while a hundred voices together tried to attract the notice of the portentous heiress; and hardly had she been seated

five minutes, before she had a hundred proposals for the honour of her fair hand in marriage. An honest tar assured her that he had stared Death in the face a thousand times, and was not at all afraid to grapple with her. A Methodist preacher whispered her, that he had long made a practice of sleeping in a bier, with some cross-bones for his pillow, and would take it as a particular favour if she would do him the honour to contribute her skull towards the better furnishing of his humble coffin. Messrs. Gall and Spurzheim next found audience; and after fingering the protuberances and cavities of her *memento mori*, pronounced her pre-eminent in the organ of pupilability. It was observed by a

Hamlet, who now came up, that she bore a strong resemblance to poor Yorick. "Extremely strong," said a wit just by; "for one can even apply to her your own words in the play: '*A lass*, poor Yorick!" Hardly had the laughter, which a pun at a masquerade is sure to excite, subsided, when a second punster observed that the young lady had a very *grave* face; and after the reasonable roar which this sally produced was happily over, a third witling remarked, that as the subject was a skull, the humour must, of course, be *capital*. It is impossible for us to say how far the Goddess of Punning might have gone in her inspirations, had not Lord Leander, habited as a Pasha, advanced; and kneel-

ing at her feet, requested that she would honour his seraglio with her comical anatomical countenance. Morland, perceiving who the Pasha was, whispered his name to Hyppolita.

"Alas! most illustrious Pasha!" said she: "I fear, were I to comply with your wishes, you would soon cut off my head, and push my skull, bumpered with wine, round the convivial table."

"Not if you would allow me to taste the nectar of your kisses," replied his lordship: "flesh and blood have lost all their charms for me. The vermilion of a cheek is but a combination of sanguineous globules, which a microscope can at once render hideous. The oval of a lovely face is

but caused by a particular disposition of fibre, muscle, and fatness, which, after all, appears just as beautiful in the breast of a plump chicken. What is shape, or contour, to the mind of a philosopher? Why should a delicate gristle at the bridge of a nose, or a superfluous bulb at the point of it, constitute the difference between beauty and deformity? By what inherent principle, by what intuitive law, must a mouth three inches wide be condemned to ridicule? And why must all mankind run mad after an angle or a curve in the countenance? Men shoot themselves, because they cannot procure some particular turn of features to live with. They pitch upon two eyes at a dance, and those two eyes

they must needs have, or lose their senses. What is a beautiful face? To the eye 'tis composed only of certain colours, and certain roundings, and curvings:—to the touch, of a certain warmth, and of a certain softness and elasticity. Poor, thoughtless mortals! ye daily give thousands to possess these unreal treasures, while ye may purchase them in a moment, and for a few shillings, though every fair face in Christendom were turned into a skull. At an oil-shop you may choose what colour you most delight in: a turner will supply you with the most graceful roundings and curvings in nature: you may heat any substance to the temperature of the lips in a skillet or a porringer: softness is at your service

in plush or velvet: and the quality of elasticity resides in a woollen cushion. Such is the reflexion of the truly philosophic mind. To that mind what difference is there between drinking out of a skull or out of a glass? It is only the difference between earth vitrified, and earth ossified. Suffer me then, oh, lady of the skull! to gaze upon thy gristle, to compose lines upon thy fleshless cheeks, and to drink delirium from thy eyeless sockets!"

The company were not at all aware that his lordship intended to be serious and philosophical, so they laughed immoderately.

"It is impossible, my lord," said Hyppolita, in a serio-comic tone, "to rid ourselves of prejudices, no doubt

providentially instilled into our minds, by any cold and sophistical ingenuity of the philosopher. There are cases where feeling is a more certain rule of right than reasoning. No force of induction, no application of chemical to moral truth, can change natural disgust into artificial satisfaction. A compendium of logic can hardly have efficacy sufficient to reconcile a child to the taste of rhubarb; and the sophist, who begins by despising what he calls vulgar prejudices, generally extends his theory over the province of morality, as well as of taste, and ends his unhappy lucubrations with a regular system of vice, crime, and atheism."

"And what is vice, fair skull?" cried Lord Leander. "There is no

fixed standard for it. What we call a crime in this country, they deem a virtue in another. The antients reckoned suicide a noble act of virtue and intrepidity:—the moderns brand it as a crime, and consider it an act of cowardice. If two men meet in a field before witnesses, and shoot each other, 'tis only manslaughter. If they meet in a room without witnesses, and commit the same violence, 'tis murder. It is like eating fish with a fork, or with a spoon. The cut is nothing; the style is every thing. Vulgarity is is in the spoon, elegance in the fork. A roof and four walls make murder—a hedge and a few clouds constitute manslaughter."

"You are addressing a skull, you

know," said Hyppolita, "and therefore can expect no wisdom from what is brainless. Let us therefore end this unequal contest; for I too can expect no sensibility from what is heartless."

A party now came forward to where Hyppolita was sitting. They consisted of bacchanals, nuns, gods, clowns, shoe-boys, tinkers, muses, sweeps, graces, and undertakers; yet they kept pertinaciously together, in despite of all congruity. Their assumed characters are not worth describing; but it may be worth while hereafter to dedicate some pages to their real.

Each of these personages addressed Hyppolita in turn; and as by this time she felt herself quite at ease, her replies were, in the highest degree, pointed

and happy. Bellair, the Marquis of Veneric, and Little, were particularly assiduous. The marquis, indeed, was quite on the alert to discover her real name; but all enquiries both of her and those present had proved fruitless.

"At least, you will unmask at supper," said he to her.

"Perhaps so," answered she. "But be assured my face will frighten you far more than my mask has done."

"Impossible," said he. "Judging by your figure, your face must be perfect. Nothing but your wit and sense can excel them. Indeed, you so accurately resemble, both in person and voice, a lady of my acquaintance, that, only for the graces of your mind, I should have sworn you were one and the same. But she was an idiot."

"Of course, then, an object of commiseration," said Hyppolita; "and no doubt you felt interested in the poor thing's welfare."

"I could not help pitying her from my soul," returned the marquis; "for the fact is, she had established an unhappy passion for me; nay, had even pursued me to my country-seat, and wanted to throw herself upon my protection."

"Which, of course, you declined," said Hyppolita.

"Undoubtedly," replied the marquis: "though the censorious world put another construction on the affair, when her friends discovered her in my house. And yet I swear to you I was solely occupied, during her stay, in endeavouring to argue her out of

her foolish partiality; but then she was such an idiot!

"Oh, the case was quite hopeless!" cried Hyppolita. "A girl who could be so silly as to love you, must certainly be too silly to be argued out of her passion."

"Love," said the marquis, "can neither be instilled nor exterminated by force of logic."

"Talk not of love," exclaimed Miss Chariot, who, advancing in a tin cap, a shield, and a sort of scaly armour, evidently intended to represent Minerva. "Talk not of love, but listen to wisdom."

"We are all attention," said the marquis.

"I am the goddess Minerva," cried

she; "and I come to instruct you in the mysteries of Isis and Anibus, as celebrated by the illustrious Cagliastro and his wife. I come to expound the peculiarities of things; to shew you that the dramatic poets of old divided their fables into parts by a cubical ratio. *Diviserunt spatia fabularum in partes cubica ratione.* That is, as Monsieur Dacier explains it, that the four songs of the chorus, between the acts, joined with the prologue and *exode*, formed the cubic number six, the most perfect of numbers. Signior Giovan Ogerio Gombaldo, as Menage informs us, *intelligentissimo delle cose della poesia dramatica*, said something of the same kind. Casaubon was none of your *semi-literati*. But, to come to the

point: Douglas, one of the shortest of our tragedies, has eighteen hundred lines. The Œdipus Tyrannus of Sophocles has but fifteen hundred and thirty-six, with all its choruses, which form no part of the proper dramatic action, and only correspond to our music between the acts. But this is not all. There is more to say still. Something remains to be said besides. I have not yet finished. There is a figure of speech which in the Greek may be called ANOIA, in English, UTTER ABSURDITY—I will give you a proof of it."

"You have already done so, please your goddess-ship," cried the marquis.

"Then I will give you another,"

replied the daughter of Jupiter, not at all disconcerted. "Virgil, in his Æneid, book xii. v. 35, makes Turnus speak thus to Æneas:

——"Recalant nostro Tiberine fluenta
Sanguine adhuc, campique ingentes ossibus alberst."

"Now, in the name of all the profundity of dullness, how could the streams be yet *hot* with their blood, and how could their bones already *whiten* the ground?

"Thomson, in his 'Spring,' has pleaded against the practice of killing oxen to make beef-steaks. He likewise tries to dissuade us from tormenting poor worms by putting them upon hooks. Upon hooks? For what purpose? Why, to catch fish, which he

immediately proceeds to give us instructions about, as if oxen and worms had feeling, and fish none. Oh, Jamie! Jamie!"

"What the plague is the woman talking of? Or, what has all this to do with her character?" demanded the Marquis, of Hyppolita.

"Nay, she is quite in character, I assure you," replied Hyppolita: "for those who set up for wisdom, generally prove themselves blockheads."

A wag who had found out the goddess's real name, now affixed a label to her back, with these words in conspicuous characters:

'Tis Miss Chariot, the plague of the poets.

Scarcely had he completed this piece

of drollery, when the goddess began to move majestically onward, "seeking whom she might devour." Every one who was behind her saw the label, and every one of course read the words inscribed on it, conceiving that they had something to do with the character she had assumed; for neither on this occasion nor on any other did any one apprehend that she had the least pretensions to the character of wisdom.

She was, therefore, a good deal astonished to hear some one cry out—*'Tis Miss Chariot, the plague of the poets.* She turned round to see who dared to utter such foul aspersions; but there was such a crowd at her back, that she could not identify the delinquent. Not a minute elapsed before the words were

again repeated. She grew enraged: she found she was discovered; and discovered too by the whole assembly. She walked hastily to the remote end of the room. A set of peasant boys and girls were dancing there, while a band of Pandeans played. *'Tis Miss Chariot, the plague of the poets*, sounded in a new accent behind her, while a general roar of laughter followed.

"May I be hanged, if I don't call a constable," said she, turning short round upon them.

"'Tis Miss Chariot!" cried those behind her.

The goddess ran precipitately from the spot to another corner. A merry-Andrew was exhibiting grimaces there.

"Go away, goddess!" cried Scara-

mouch: "my fooleries are not fit for you, who are the goddess of wisdom."

"*'Tis Miss Chariot,*" said some one near her, "*the plague of the poets.*

Miss Chariot screamed with passion, and collared the speaker, who in vain attempted to rescue himself from the grasp of the virgin goddess.

"A constable! a constable! watch! watch! watch!" vociferated the daughter of Jupiter; and at this strenuous appeal, watchmen, harlequins, clowns, emperors, and link-boys, crowded round her. Nothing she said was heard; for every one was laughing; but the words, "*Miss Chariot, the plague of the poets,*" were banded about in all possible directions.

At length, the goddess got upon a

table, and waved her spear for silence. Quiz was now the order of the night, and accordingly all gathered round the table, and were hushed into eager expectation.

Her speech was, at least, concise; and we flatter ourselves we can give it, with far more historic truth than Livy or Gibbon, than Sallust or Robertson, have given the speeches of their generals, who, we well know, never spoke half of what was written for them.

Silence being obtained, the goddess of wisdom thus delivered her sentiments:

"What I wish you all to hear is this: that you are a set of the greatest blockheads I ever met with." And

with these emphatic words, the virgin jumped from the table and rushed out of the room. A regular groan, garnished with hisses, followed her, and bursts of laughter crowned the whole.

It may be necessary to state, that the goddess paraded home in her Minerva costume; that the votaries of Venus pursued her track; that the sons of the arch-thief, Mercury, joined the procession; that not a descendant of Phæton was near to snatch her from her predicament; that Jove himself descended in torrents; that several Junos were showered from lofty garrets as she passed; that a son of Mars wanted to seize her, on suspicion of her having purloined a helmet from

the first Life Guards; and that, at last, when she got safe to her own door, she wished her followers with Pluto; or, in plain English, pitched them all to h—ll.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In a short time after the goddess had vanished supper was announced, and the whole party hurried down to secure good seats, and the choicest *morceaux*. Hyppolita and Morland had hardly taken their places at table, before there were joined by the Marquis of Veneric, who, planting himself close beside Hyppolita, reminded her of her promise to unmask.

"You will recollect," said she, "that from the moment I do so my real character is to commence. It will therefore depend upon circum-

stances whether I shall continue to converse with you."

"That is, I presume," returned the marquis, "it will depend upon your finding, when I myself unmask, that I am a person of sufficient rank and respectability."

Hyppolita bowed her head.

"Then," continued the marquis, tearing off his mask, "I hasten to decide my fate. Allow me to announce myself to you as the Marquis of Veneric."

Hyppolita now began to untie her mask, while the marquis, in the most elegant phraseology, and with the greatest nonchalance, kept assuring her of his extreme impatience to behold her features. In the midst of his

anticipations down dropped the mask, and he beheld—the beautiful idiot of Long's Hotel. He could scarcely credit his eyes.

"You!" exclaimed he. "What, you? you, the silly girl that I—Nay, how is this? As I hope for heaven, I had always thought you a downright driveller, and now I find you a miracle of wit, elegance, sentiment, and agreeability."

"You must also be sensible what I find you to be," returned Hyppolita, "and that I cannot, after what has already passed between us, consent to hold any farther communication with you."

"Nay, this is a cruel and unnecessary punctilio of delicacy," cried the

marquis: "recollect, it was you who deceived me first, by affecting idiotism. Why then blame me for affecting love?"

"We will not argue the point, my lord," said Hyppolita. "It is quite sufficient that I insist upon your leaving me."

"And consider yourself extremely fortunate," said Morland, who by this time had also unmasked, "that no public example has been made of you; for you well perceive that the mental incompetency, upon which you depended for impunity, in a court of justice, would not have availed you."

The marquis was struck dumb. He had nothing to do but retire from the scene with silent dignity, which he

most happily accomplished; and joining a party at another table, recounted his adventure with all the ease of a man of the world, who, knowing that a story is about to be made public, to his disadvantage, blunts the keen edge of the scandal by giving the first stroke himself.

Now the set among whom the marquis had seated himself were of mixed morals, and, in the vulgar phrase, *up to any thing*. They consisted of Captain Brasslace, Sir Felicitous Rag, Colonel Hawker, Tommy Sherbert, and Sir Vimiera Cranium. Of these, a few short notices may not be amiss.

Captain Brasslace, as he was called, but Mr. Brasslace in reality,

(for in rank he never exceeded a cornet) yet captain being a good travelling name, we will say, pro forma—Captain Brasslace, is the natural son of a Scotch baronet.

After going to India, for what purpose we know not, he figured for a short time, like a viper in the sun, in one of His Majesty's regiments of Hussars, and had among his intimates a dealer in corn, who, if we are rightly informed, has had, like the rest of his friends, good reason to regret his acquaintance, and in gaining *knowledge*, has, at the same time, lost consequence by it.

This paragon of accomplished villany was a complete Proteus in the forms he would assume, and the arts

to undo which his ill-directed mind possessed. He had wit at his *finger's ends*, for by them were effected such surprising feats of *dexterity*, that Breslaw himself might have been astounded at their success.

To betray his friend, and ruin his most intimate acquaintance, were *common* efforts of genius to support his boundless extravagance and assumed magnificence. That the tailor, the coachmaker, the tavern-keeper, horse-dealer, and money-lender, should be immolated to the expense of his establishment, were but his most common achievements: they added to those slaves who followed his car, and whom he drove till they *broke down*. He could pension himself on the credulous

unsuspecting female, and drain the exchequer of infamy to pamper his appetites and support his pomp. The young fopling, who admires a well-dressed and naturally painted doll, and who does not know how to put on his clothes, or spend his own money, was on many occasions the victim of his own folly, and expired for want before the shrine of this seducer. When unfair and ill-gained wealth was conjured from the *ci-devant* possessor's coffers into his own pocket, he would force him to *toss up* for his *life* as he had before done for his *property*, and run the risk of adding murder to the long list of other crimes which blackened the detestable catalogue enrolled in his heart and mind.

Brasslace was moreover a *master of arts*, and it was the *black art which he taught;* for when bankruptcy and beggary had overwhelmed the man who had lost his fortune to him at cards or dice, or had forfeited it by being bail for him, or joining him in securities, he would initiate him in the mysteries of his practice, and make him the partner of his delinquency.—Was he safe even then? No.—When successful, he would plunder him of his gains, or expose him as an impostor to the world, if he did not exhaust all his resources in the form of hush-money. Sorry and ashamed are we to say that titles and noble names decorate some of his many pupils, and that they walk abroad unsuspected, and unknown.

When we said, at the commencement of this account, that Brasslace *was* this character, we meant, that at present, narrowed in his means, degraded by his deeds, shunned by the many, and tolerated by the few, he lurks about like a winged bird of prey; and the pigeon must be young indeed who sinks beneath his grasp. Time was when he was surrounded by his satellites in all the glare of successful wickedness.

We cannot conclude without adding that this dashing character, who never had a shilling of patrimony, has contrived to get white-washed for a great many thousands; and, as his last act previous to migration, won a considerable sum of a young man, who,

under the pressure of shame, and the fear of being shot in a duel, blew off that part of his head which should have contained a brain.

The *simple* knight, SIR FELICITOUS RAG, looks not back to crusades, knight templars, nor even to the romantic pages of knight-errantry for his descent; nor did any gallant achievements ennoble the father of whom he is the offspring: all the *gallantry* was on his mother's side, and all the *beauty* too; for his papa was a very plain little man, while the foreign lady, who had the felicity to be his mamma, was a very beautiful woman. A very valuable collection of pictures, and a large service of plate, with a handsome

fortune bequeathed by old Rag, first brought this gentleman into notice. His elder brother's state of mind, it is presumable, may also not be unprofitable to him; we say *may*, for we profess ignorance on this subject, as we also do of any bright qualities which may have ushered the gentleman in question into fashionable life.

The first thing he was observed for was driving four-in-hand, and having been the protector of a very handsome looking woman, who shared his apartment and purse. We do not confine his history, however, to the old story of

What can Tommy Titmouse do?
He can drive a phæton and two.
Can Tommy Titmouse do no more?
Yes—he can drive a phæton and four.

for he was a parliament man, and once spoke in the house concerning certain Piccadilly riots; and he was an officer, but not on service: he moreover was a blue and buff man; but it is strange how *habits* change! for the true blue has been succeeded by *blushing red;* and the carrying up an address has changed his *colours* and *habits*, by altering his title and politics. How pretty Sir Felicitous sounds, instead of his former name!

It has been matter of wonder to many how he maintains the style of magnificence which he has borrowed from the lustre of torches and a sideboard of plate; and how service succeeds to service, and pictures follow pictures, even after a change of the

former, and a sale of the latter. But the purchasers of those works of art—the A. B. money-brokers, and the X. Y. attornies, best know this; for odds have been laid again and again, whether he is ruined, or a hoarder up of money—whether a borrower, or lender in the market.

An acquaintance (for friendship is not the *fort* of the knight) happened to meet him coming out of the house of a notorious money-lender: he looked confused; and the good-natured acquaintance, with more benevolence than Sir F——— deserved, asked if he had been granting an annuity. "No," answered the foul attorney; "he has been here to employ his capital in an annuity—i. e. to put it out

at from sixteen to twenty per cent." Bravo! We now see why his real name was sunk: it savours too much of the *Judaical tribe*. We have even heard that there was originally an H *prefixed to his surname*.

But how are we to reconcile avarice and extravagance, meanness and magnificence, usury and prodigality?—By the whole of these contrasts coming from a soul made up of *self alone*, and which could accommodate itself to selling exorbitantly dear its pictures and other valuables to the ignorant and credulous, purchasing at any price to dazzle the vulgar eye, borrowing at any rate to support mushroom consequence, and lending (when resources come round) at the highest possible

interest, to keep up the mockery of nobility. When a certain lord named his horse Potatoes, and, with transcendent wit, erudition, and originality, set him down Pot oooooooo, or Pot 8 o's, as it appeared in the Racing Kalendar, an individual at Oxford wrote the following impromptu:

Why put 8 o's to lengthen out a name,
When *one* sums up your learning, wit, and fame?

We say nothing of the case in point, but leave it to those who are known to the *party*, as it is called in money matters.

Colonel Hawker is a most amusing, entertaining, and astonishing gentleman. He is the greatest sportsman, the hardest rider, the most powerful

champion, the most wonderful drinker, the most successful lover, and the most *extensive historian* we ever met with; but be it well remembered that he is the historian of "*his own times*," and the hero of his own romance, and that he might say of all his feats—*Quo sine teste geri*, et quorum *pars* magna *fui*, and also quorum *nox* conscia *sola* est. However, it so happens, that he never was beaten, or outdone, except once when he hurt himself against a *flint*.

The colonel has killed three million head of game, can ride you one hundred and fifty miles without drawing bit, and can drink a dozen of wine at dinner, which no one but himself can *swallow:* he has as many wives and

concubines as Solomon; and at tilts and tournaments outdoes Don Quixote hollow. Besides, he has a forty-five barrel ✕ gun, a seventeen barrelled brace of pistols, a Spanish rifle curved at the end, to shoot round a corner, and an albaletre, with which he can draw a *longer bow* than any man in the three kingdoms.

In fine, the colonel has run down many a hare in swiftness; and at leaping he can take such a *stretch*, that one might fairly say, "catch him who can?"

As for Tommy Sherbet, time was when a hope might have been entertained that out of the ashes of the sire would have arisen another light, which

might have shone in the senate, and have represented the departed patriot. Unhappily, for many years previous to the extinction of that luminary which burned out so rapidly, and concluded in the smoke of obscurity, no such expectation could be cherished. Idle habits, lax principles, versatility, inconstancy, inconsistency of conduct, a want of reading, and a still greater want of reflection, rendered the thing impossible.

The father was, indeed, a sterling, uncorrupted, and unalloyed patriot, an elegant speaker, and an honest and consistent politician. The contrast which his son offers, is, that with very good natural parts, he has confined all his mental exertions to the charms of

conviviality, the sallies of a witling, ridiculous pun, more ridiculous mimickry, and most ridiculous, superlatively ridiculous, eccentricity of conduct.

This feather-bed soldier scarcely ever saw a parade; and this staff lounger gained the rank of captain, as the insane Colonel L—— did his high situation in the turret of a prison, "not by his own personal abilities, but by the *interference of his friends.*" This was the answer of the gentleman in question when peeping through the iron grating of the Tolbooth at Edinburgh, and being asked by a passing acquaintance—"how he came there." Tommy rose into notice by a C——l, and fell by a C——r.

He married beauty, without fortune, interest, or rank; and having consumed his inside by alcohol under various disguises, he has disappeared from all chance of advancement or promotion, and migrated where very little *Hope* was left for him. The dissipated companions of his circle, however, loved and regretted him; for he had much humour, good-nature, and spirit. But, alas! it is to be feared that himself, and the surrounding *choice spirits* of the festive board, would be found on analyzing them to be literally little else than pure *spirits of wine.*

It must however be allowed that he was admirably facetious at times, and could even make the Marquis of Bayard laugh, who was not over apt to

unbend; for it used to be said, when General V—— commanded in the North, that he was so erect that he appeared to have swallowed a poker; and when the marquis superseded him, it was said that his lordship looked as if he had swallowed General V——.

Tommy said a thousand merry things, and never spared himself. Amongst others—being told by a wag that he understood from his father that the Sherbets were of an ancient noble house, and that they had been O'Sherbets:—"To be sure," replied Tom; "and no one has a greater right to the O than us; for we *owe* every body." We cannot conclude without wishing a return of health to

this gentleman; and whenever he drops, let his foibles be what they may, we are sure that his *heart will be found on the right side.*

Sir Vimiera Cranium was one of the most intimate associates of Lord Leander. His memoirs, if minutely recorded, would present unequivocal testimony that the bullies and the Jehus of the day are the sagest of human beings. If to "know one's self" be a mark of wisdom, the connoisseurs in horse-flesh, and the adepts in boxing, are the most sagacious members of society. They were designed by nature for the stable and the cockpit, and they fulfil their destiny. Nor are they unsusceptible

of the highest virtues. To a man who prefers the conversation of grooms to the society of princes, and feels as much interest in the health of his dog, as in the welfare of a mother or a sister, the praise of meekness and humanity cannot be denied: from him who lavishes his fortune on the most worthless objects, and sacrifices all the enjoyments that are the usual attendants on rank and riches, to the pursuit of vulgar pleasures and joyless debauchery, we cannot withhold the ascription of generous magnanimity.

The career of Sir Vimiera at the university presented a striking contrast to that of Lord Leander; but the discordance of their pursuits did not repress the ardour of their friendship.

While Lord Leander was diverting his solitary hours with the gambols of his favourite bear, his only companion during six days of the week, Sir Vimiera was engaged in sportive intercourse with the fair maids of Histon, or driving for a wager the Cambridge Telegraph. His mode of dissipating time, and defying the statutes to which he had sworn obedience, was in the true style of university buckism. He rose about half past nine with a devil of a head-ache; at half past ten, if he did not think it proper to pass the lecture room window in his shooting jacket, he could not refrain at least from sporting his great coat, and hiring a hack of Barron's, which he just galloped a short way along the Trumpington road, that

if any of the old dons were taking their morning walk, they might admire his spirit and wonder at his agility. About one he moved off to Lichfield's; and after eating as much pastry as would satisfy a dozen of his companions, returned to his rooms, and contrived by four o'clock to arrange his cravat. After dinner, either he had a wine party and got *hellishly cut*, or set off in a tandem to Bolshom. In the former case he staggered out about half an hour before the gates were shut, rambled about the town in search of a cyprian, kicked up a row with the townsmen, rushed into Frank Smith's coffee-house, told a long story about his father's dogs in the tone of a stentor, met with three or four friends as much

done over as himself, and paid a visit to Simeon. Here they blew up the whole congregation. In their return they broke half a dozen lamps, wrenched off half a dozen knockers, and staggered into college just in time to escape the penalty of sleeping out of gates. From the middle of December to the beginning of February Sir Vimiera was in his highest glory. During that period, he shared the honours of whipism with hell-fire Dick, and drove his mistress to Huntingdon in three quarters of an hour. In proportion to his notoriety, his ambition to rise still higher in the ranks of sporting celebrity became more vehement. He was the nominal founder of a society from which the *whips* borrowed their

language and costume: he was the first inventor of the *lily shallow* hat, and the tally-ho buttons: to his ingenuity we are indebted for the whiskers *a la rigmarole*, the classical denomination of upper Benjamin, and the sublime adjuration—"bang up d—me to the mark." He purchased a commission in a regiment of dragoons, but the uniform was a desperate inconvenience. His last efforts at notoriety were his appearance at the Opera House, where he acquired the character of a *devilish clever hand* at *kicking up* a row, and his courageous decapitation of a dead trumpeter lying on the field of battle at Vimiera.

All these worthies heard the marquis's account of the rise, progress,

and decline of his amour, together with the history of his mistress's affected idiotism, and her subsequent display of wit, fascination and good sense. They heard too that Coulter and his wife were *outrées,* and their protector, Morland, somebody that nobody knew, without a penny and without a vice. Were ever a quartetto so for fun and frolic? It was therefore resolved to avenge the noble marquis's discomfiture by some ingenious prank or other upon those who had presumed to repulse his condescending attempts at seduction.

They soon formed a plan of operations, and immediately after supper separated for the purpose of preparing its execution.

In the mean time dancing commenced. A fat alderman and an antiquated maiden, in the costume of Elizabeth, led off with a minuet. Next followed country dances, and afterwards a waltz between a chimney-sweeper and an Indian princess. Other waltzing couples succeeded, and, by their rapid and elegant movements, gave a brilliancy to the scene that no other dance is so capable of bestowing.

For our own parts we cannot perceive any very great immorality or impropriety in the amusement of waltzing. In a public assembly, while young people are surrounded by grandmothers, grandfathers, and venerable virgins, we see no difference between a young man's holding a young lady's hands, or

laying one on her shoulder and the other on her waist. Are the peasantry of this or any other country corrupted by those rural freedoms which they take during the dance? Do they not pass their arms round each others' waists, nay, and kiss too, without the smallest imputation on their purity? And why should those actions which produce no pernicious effect upon the vulgar be considered vicious and injurious in the more refined classes? On the contrary, it appears to us that those forced affectations of delicacy augur far worse for the private morals of the polite world than any public trespasses upon rigid decorum could possibly do. And it is upon this principle that we cannot avoid consi-

dering the reformation in the manners of our stage, which no longer admits of double entendre, or high-wrought intrigue, as rather a symptom of our degeneracy in real life. At least, if we may argue by analogy, we shall find that precisely in proportion as the morals and manners of France grew more depraved, the decencies of the stage became more strict; and ladies who would have declared themselves shocked at any loose scene or expression exhibited there, were the foremost to violate honour and delicacy in every other place. We cannot agree with Burke, that vice loses half its evil by losing all its grossness. The good, honest, ruddy, plain wife of Queen Bess's days would willingly

sit out what we call an obscene play, and laugh with cordial innocence at its ill-disguised ribaldry. She would then go home to her chaste bed, and rise at five in the morning to make huge puddings and hunting pasties, without a single wish to realize the scenes she had witnessed on the stage. She exhibited no mincing delicacy, because she had no latent motive for affecting disgust. The hoyden may cause uneasiness lest she should fall in an unwary moment; but the prude is a predetermined creature, and should excite suspicion and distrust in precisely the same proportion that she appears circumspect and delicate. But to return.

The company did not begin to break up till four in the morning, about

which time Morland, Hyppolita, and the Coulters, took their departure. Morland had called a coach: the party reached it with some difficulty, as they had to pass to it through whole files of carriages. He then handed in the two ladies; Coulter followed; and just as Morland himself was stepping in, a man of decent appearance tapped him on the shoulder, and begged to speak a word in his private ear. Morland, a little surprised, asked him what he could want of him at that hour?

"Why, master," said the fellow, "I have waited for you these four hours, and so 'tis your own fault that I have not arrested you before. Howsomever, I arrest you now, at the suit of Mr. Hezekiah Brim, hosier, of Fleet

Street, and request the honour of your company to a lock-up house, till convenience suits for clapping you into the Bench."

This was a thunder-stroke to poor Morland, who had indeed owed about twenty pounds to the said Hezekiah Brim, but had never been solicited for payment; and was besides well acquainted with him, as his father had dealt with him for many years.

However, the affair was at present past remedy. Accompany the bailiff he must; and as a feeling of pride prevented his acquainting Coulter with the circumstance, he returned to the door of the carriage, and informed him that an unforeseen event must oblige him to forego the pleasure of accom-

panying him home. Then heartily bidding him and the ladies adieu, he walked off with the catch-pole.

On the way he took off his disguise, as he fortunately had his own usual dress under it. The fellow then led him a dance of nearly an hour and a half before they stopped at the spunging-house. It was situated in a lane off Threadneedle Street, and bore the appearance of a public house. When they entered the coffee-room, the bailiff addressed Morland:

"Now, Sir, as I see you are a gentleman, I only ask you to pledge yourself not to stir from this room till I return, as I am obliged to go a quarter of a mile further on an affair of a like kind. All I expect, in return for

my civility, is a pound note, and your silence as to what brings you here; for if the people of the house thought you were a prisoner of mine, they would never forgive my not having locked you up above stairs. Had I done so, you could not have got off under two or three pounds; so you save a pound, and I gain one. There are secrets in all trades."

"So I perceive," replied Morland; "and I thank you for the confidence you repose in me. I promise you I will not stir hence till I see you again, and here is the sum you demand."

He gave the fellow a note, who made a low bow, and vanished in a great hurry.

Morland sat for some time, cold and

disconsolate. The people of the house had only just risen, as Morland and his conductor entered; but as soon as a fire was lighted, a girl came to enquire of him what his business was there.

"I am waiting for a person, who is to meet me here on business," replied he, "and in the meanwhile should be glad of some breakfast."

This was accordingly procured, though a miserable one; and Morland, after it was over, employed himself in writing to a friend, who, he knew, would lose no time in redeeming him from his present embarrassing situation.

However, six, seven, eight, and nine o'clock successively passed, without

his seeing any thing more of the bailiff. At length he dispatched a letter to his friend, who, he thought, might by this time be out of bed.

In another hour his friend arrived with money to pay the bill and costs; but as the bailiff had not yet made his appearance, nothing further could be done. They sat chatting till eleven, but still no bailiff. At length, quite at a loss how to account for his extraordinary negligence, Morland sent for the person of the house, and asked him whether he knew the young man who had brought him thither.

The man said he had not seen him at all. The girl, who had seen him, being summoned, said that she had no knowledge of him.

"I am surprised at that," replied Morland, "as he sometimes brings customers to you. In fact, he left this for the purpose of arresting a debtor, and locking him up in your house."

"Then I will be apt to turn both of them out by the shoulders," said the man, "for, thank my stars, mine never was, nor ever will be, a spunging-house."

"Not a spunging-house!" cried Morland. "I assure you, he told me it was; nay more, he has arrested me, and desired me to conceal my situation from you, lest you should be angry with him, for not having made me hire one of your apartments."

"'Tis a swindling transaction, I'll be sworn," said the man. "I suppose as

how he diddled you out of some money."

"A pound note," answered Morland.

"Aye, aye," said the other, "you have been nicely imposed upon."

"There is more in this than we are yet aware of," said Morland to his friend. "However, our first step will be to call on my friend Brim, and ascertain from him whether I am in a state of arrest or not."

His friend agreed to accompany him, and accordingly they called on the hosier. The honest man was quite indignant at the idea of his name having been used for such a scandalous object as that of deceiving and injuring the son of a man to whom he was under so many obligations. Morland,

therefore, extremely piqued at the whole transaction, hastened to his own lodgings, and having changed his dress, repaired to Long's Hotel, and enquired for Coulter.

The waiters informed him that Coulter had not returned from the masquerade till eight o'clock that morning, and then only for a few minutes. That Mrs. Coulter had accompanied him, but Hyppolita was not with them—that they appeared in great agitation about her, and that he believed they were gone to Marlborough Street, for the purpose of setting the police to search for her.

Dreadfully disconcerted at this intelligence, poor Morland now clearly saw that his pretended arrest formed

part of the plot, and that probably the whole affair originated with some of those bloods who were at the masquerade. He did not scruple to place at the head of the conspirators the Marquis of Veneric, and accordingly he hastened, without loss of a moment, to that nobleman's house.

His lordship was at home, and at breakfast. The servant denied him, but Morland rushed past him, flew up stairs, and cost the marquis a cup and some real Turkey coffee, both of which dropped from his hand at the sudden and unceremonious entrance of Morland.

"So, Sir," cried Morland, breathless, and advancing close to him—"so, my lord, you have, I find, made another attempt."

"Not I, upon my honour," said the marquis, rising, and retreating rapidly: "I never saw her from the time she left the masquerade."

"Saw whom?" cried Morland. "I mentioned no one—you have betrayed yourself already."

"Good God!" exclaimed the marquis. "I only conjecture what you allude to. You—you spoke of a—another attempt, and so I thought—but, may I drop dead this moment if I—— Bless me! good Sir, your looks alarm me. Do take something."

"I will take a villain by the collar," exclaimed Morland, verifying his words with a sudden spring; and, now, Sirrah, hoary impostor, here I hold you till you tell me where your infernal agents have placed her."

"Help! ho! an assault! murder! help!" vociferated the marquis.

Morland, in a perfect phrenzy of rage, griped him by the throat, and swore he would choak him if he attempted the least noise.

The marquis could only put up his hands in a suppliant posture; and then Morland, relaxing his grasp, and seizing a knife from the breakfast table, said to him, with all the composure of a man who had made up his mind:—

"I give you one minute to decide. Either accompany me to the place where you have concealed that persecuted girl, or take the consequence. A word above a whisper, and you die."

"Surely," whispered the marquis, in the most touching accent, "you

will not murder me, because I happen not to know the young lady's situation."

"You know it well," said Morland: "but know it or not, your life pays the forfeit if you do not consent to come with me. Speak—the minute has almost elapsed, and beware how you tamper with a man that is mad."

"I consent then to accompany you," said his lordship.

"Take your hat," said Morland, letting him go.

"I must give my servants some directions first," said the other.

"Utter a word to them," answered Morland, "and you seal your own fate. Come, my lord, the door is open; the stairs are before you—go forward."

The petrified marquis obeyed, as

well as his trembling limbs would permit. Morland followed close at his heels; they reached the hall without encountering a single domestic, and soon after had got into a hackney coach.

"Now, marquis," said Morland, "which way are we to drive?"

"My good fellow——" began the marquis.

"Which way, Sirrah?" cried Morland, in a most authoritative and appalling tone.

"Beyond Islington," said the other, faintly, and sunk back in the coach, more dead than alive.

Morland was now silent, but his eyes were rolling in his head. He ground his teeth and grinned, felt the edge of the knife, which he had never relinquished, and muttered sullenly, while ever and

anon, he cast a piercing look of malignity at the marquis, who lay at the opposite corner, afraid to look at him, and afraid to take his eyes off from him. Need we inform our readers that this desperation of Morland's was all assumed.

When the carriage had passed Islington, the coachman stopped to know how much farther he was to drive.

Morland referred to the marquis. The marquis hesitated. Morland looked at his knife—the corners of his mouth began to turn downwards, and his nostrils began to be much inflated.

"To that small house up the lane, on the left," said the marquis, who thought it just as well not to be assassinated.

The coachman drove on, and soon

reached the small house. Morland jumped out first; the marquis descended slowly after him, and knocked at the door. An old woman opened it. The gentlemen entered, and the marquis led the way into a wretched parlour.

"So far, so good," said Morland, "but where is the lady?"

"Mr. Morland," said the marquis, "I have one favour to beg of you before I produce her."

"Name it," said Morland.

"Amnesty for the past," returned the marquis, "and safety for the future."

"Psha!" cried Morland, "where is the lady?" and his eyes glittered, after the approved style of maniacs.

"Above stairs," said the marquis, who now saw that compromise was impossible. "Mrs. Jenkins, shew us the room."

The old woman took a key from her pocket, and began to ascend the stairs. They arrived at a door, which the beldam unlocked. Morland instantly rushed into the room—but what a sight did he behold! His Hyppolita lay on the bed, her face, hands, and clothes covered with blood; the paleness of death was on her cold features, and Morland saw, but too plainly, that the vital spark was fled for ever.

CHAPTER XIX.

"VILLAIN!" exclaimed Morland, "restore her to life this instant, or die!" And he pounced like an eagle upon the poor marquis, who had already saved him half the trouble, being nearly dead with terror. Before, however, he could extricate himself, or implore mercy, the distracted young man had flung him to the further end of the room; and, as the door was open, it struck the marquis that it would be a most convenient time to take advantage of it, and try the benefit of a little fresh air. He therefore slid

unperceived out of the room (for Morland had now turned his attention towards the corpse), and set off at a pretty round rate for London, whither he was followed, "*non passibus æquis*," by his old woman.

Morland, meantime, had raised the body of poor Hyppolita, and tried to discover if there were yet any remains of life in it; but in vain. He then sat down by the side of the bed, and wept like a child.

"Just when I had begun to indulge in the sweetest hopes," cried he, in broken accents, "to be snatched away thus! Ruffians! murderers! Oh, angelic girl! object of my only love! source of my dearest blessings! why, why has Heaven permitted thee to be

cut off in the prime of thy years, in the blossom of thy beauty? How gladly, how rapturously would I have sacrificed my own existence to have preserved thine! But the dream is past: all my plans of happiness are at an end; and now I have but one joy in prospect, to meet and embrace thee in that heaven where thou art now the brightest of its seraphs!"

Here he paused, overcome with his emotions, and hung gazing on the body. But what words can express his astonishment, his delight, his transport, when he beheld two pearly tears making their way through the closed eye-lids of his mistress, and stealing silently down her pale cheeks!

"Speak!" he cried. "Good God!

speak; or see me expire upon the spot."

"Yes," said Hyppolita, opening her eyes, with a short glance of gratitude, and then covering them with her hands, "yes, I still live, dear Morland. Your kindness, your affection, your—your love has overwhelmed me. I know not what I say—but if my future life can recompense any pain I may have cost you, 'tis devoted to your happiness. I give it to you.—Heaven forgive me if I have said too much; but surely it was impossible to——Oh, Morland, I know your heart, and I—I accept it!"

"Blessings! eternal blessings on you, for those heavenly words!" exclaimed the almost fainting youth; but

his heart was too full to say more. A few delicious moments they wept in silence, and then, recovering from their delirium by degrees, they poured forth, in calmer raptures, all their past feelings, and all their future views.

There, young lady, or young gentleman, or whoever you are, old or young, who have just finished this passage—there is a touch of the heroics for you! Lord! how easy it is to make people cry! Ten to one but the tears are still standing about your eye-lashes; and yet it has not cost us hard-hearted authors one salt drop, and not more than one midnight hour, to make all this fuss in your sensibilities. Horace was an arrant liar when he told you that we must weep

ourselves in order to make others weep. Think you that actors feel what they perform? Think you that Miss O'Neill, that paragon of the pathetic, fancies herself starving when Jane Shore protests she has not broken her fast? If she says so, do not believe her. When we give way to sensibility, we cannot have coldness enough to consult judgment: and how is it possible for an actress to be graceful in grief, if she be, in good earnest, under its influence? Take her in real life—something of a pathetic nature occurs: her dearest friend has become a bankrupt; or the friend of her bosom runs off with a fellow who can just pay his way to Gretna.—Do you suppose that her grief, which is then unaffected,

consists in beautiful attitude, interesting languor, graceful deportment? Oh, no! She probably throws herself plump into a chair, or on the foot of her bed, pulls out an iron-moulded handkerchief, and begins to whimper, like a shool-boy. She thrusts her knuckles into her eyes, blows her nose loudly, hangs down her head, and lets her lips project with all the mumpish reality of a woman who knows that nobody is looking at her.

Talk no more, then, of a feeling writer. Like other tyrants, he makes you feel most, who himself feels least. So now let us proceed quietly and decently with the rest of the scene.

All the transports natural to such a *denouement*, as we have here exhibited,

being happily over, the lovers began to talk plain sense like other people; and Morland suffered another passion, just as common as love, and called curiosity, to make its appearance. He therefore asked Hyppolita how she came to be trepanned into this situation. Hyppolita being of a communicative disposition, and feeling a natural pleasure in talking of past dangers, while in present safety, thus indulged his passion.

"After you had so very suddenly left us in the coach, we desired the coachman to drive to Long's. He set forward at a furious rate, but the night being dark, and we occupied with relating the adventures of the night, we did not for some time perceive that we had got into a part of the town

which appeared perfectly strange. However, we concluded that the coachman was only taking us a shorter way, though we could not avoid remarking that had we gone the longer way we must have reached home long before. But before we had time to enter upon a regular discussion of the circumstance, the coach suddenly overturned with a violent shock. I was stunned; and scarcely conscious of what passed, was conveyed by two or three men into a house, where I remained a few minutes to recover, and then enquired for my uncle and aunt.

"One of the persons, a young gentleman, whom I should certainly recognize again, informed me that they had been greatly injured by the accident,

but that, if I felt myself able, I should be conveyed to them immediately. To this I of course assented, and having gotten into another coach, was driven rapidly along. In a very short time, however, I began to perceive that we were arriving at the out-skirts of the town, and I checked the string. This was of no avail: the coach drove still faster, and in a few minutes I found myself at this very house. I now saw that some villany was intended, and therefore refused to leave the coach; but they forced me out, brought me up to this room, and having locked the door, left me for the night. This morning that horrible old woman brought me some breakfast, but I have seen nobody since. This blood, which you see upon my face and clothes, was

the effect of a fruitless attempt I made to escape at the window. I had squeezed half my body between the iron bars, when in consequence, I suppose, of the extreme pressure, my nose burst out bleeding, so I was compelled to draw myself in again, and lie upon the bed.—I had but just recovered from a fainting fit when I heard people coming up stairs, so I resolved to affect insensibility, that I might the better judge of their intentions, and thus be the better able to frustrate them."

"You have, at least, frustrated mine effectually," said Morland, "for you have prevented me from attending your funeral, which was my fixed determination."

"I will spare you the trouble for the

present," replied Hyppolita; "and whenever I die, be assured I will leave you money enough to buy a suit of mourning."

"Then your husband is not to be your heir," said Morland, with a sly look.

"Nay," returned she, "no more of husbands at present. It will be time to think of that some years hence."

"Months you mean," said Morland. "But come, it is full time to explain why you adopted the extraordinary character of an idiot. Am I yet entitled to beg an explanation of that mystery?"

"Fully so," replied Hyppolita: "and I will now candidly confess my motive for the deception. My parents,

I believe I have already informed you, died in India. They had no connexions there; but my mother, on her dying bed, requested of me to come to England with my governess, and reside with my uncle and aunt till such time as I should choose to marry. Accordingly, my governess sailed with me from Bengal; and, during the passage, told me so many stories of the worthlessness, selfishness, and insincerity of young men in England, of their pursuing heiresses, and affecting the most violent love to their persons, while in reality every affection was fixed upon their money, that at last I resolved, perhaps inconsiderately, to pass in England for a girl of an imbecile mind, and thus, by throwing fortune-hunters

off their guard, be enabled to judge of their character and designs. If I found them determined to unite their fates with mine, and to praise me in a manner which my assumed idiotism could not merit, I was resolved to reject them, and consider them mere fortune-hunters. But, on the contrary, if I found any one who appeared to feel for my mental imbecility, and who shewed a disinterested regard for me, by doing me personal services, and yet by rejecting all thoughts of improving his own fortune by securing mine in a matrimonial alliance, him I determined to select as a friend, and, if he himself pleased, as a lover. This was a romantic, perhaps a silly project; but it has turned out fortunately. I will not

now affect the puny delicacy of concealing my feelings on the subject. I have found in you, Morland, the man I wished to find; and assure yourself that you owe my partiality to the contempt you always evinced for my understanding, and to your having resisted the attraction of my wealth, because it must have been accompanied with an incumbrance which your delicate and honourable mind was incapable of accepting. Though you believed me an idiot, and saw that I did not dislike you, you yet made no attempt to obtain me. Had you done so, you had long since lost all the fruits of your attempt; I had still remained an apparent idiot, and might perhaps have passed the period of youth without having ever

met with one who would act the noble and feeling part which I so much admire in you."

"As I have acquired an interest in your heart by my conduct," said Morland, "I shall not affect the foolish modesty of appearing to lessen my own merit; for why should I attempt to lessen your regard? Most undoubtedly I would never have thought seriously of you, had I continued to believe you an idiot. I was, in fact, too selfish for such a scheme; because I should at all times prefer indigence and a single life to wealth and a matrimonial companion whose folly would embitter my future hours. Had I preferred riches to every other consideration, you would not have found me a whit less

adulatory than the rest of your admirers."

"Come, then," said Hyppolita, "this is no place for further explanation. I must hasten home, acquaint my uncle and aunt candidly with the whole truth, and confess to them that I am not a blockhead."

"And I," said Morland, "will take immediate steps to punish the author of this last outrage against you. I trust you will henceforward consider me as your natural protector, and I promise you that all other attempts to injure your peace of mind shall prove as abortive as the last."

Hyppolita replied, and Morland replied again, and so once more did Hyppolita, and so once more did Mor-

land; nor was it till after another half hour had elapsed that Hyppolita repeated her former observations on the unsuitableness of the place for further discourse. The lovers then (Hyppolita having first washed her face, and adjusted her dress) left the house, and arm in arm proceeded homewards.

On arriving at Long's, they were told that Mr. and Mrs. Coulter had just returned, and were above stairs. Morland therefore took his departure, and Hyppolita hastened to announce her safety. On entering the room, she found the worthy couple, breathless with fatigue, wiping their warm faces, and sobbing in concert, at the supposed loss and ruin of their niece.

When they perceived her, however,

running into the room, alive and cheerful, they jumped up with one accord, and almost devoured her with their caresses. It was, who should get to her lips the first. It was, "Where have you been? What became of you? What happened? Tell us all;"—and a thousand other questions, which effectually prevented her from telling any thing. At length she prevailed on them to sit down; and after having recounted the whole affair, she thus continued:—

"But, my dear aunt and uncle, the most extraordinary circumstance of all is to come yet. You must know then, that I am no longer in a state of mental imbecility."

"Mental imbe—— What?" said Coulter.

"I am no longer a fool," said Hyppolita: "I have recovered all my faculties; and Morland will inform you that I am one of the most sensible, well-informed, and agreeable young ladies of the present day."

"You!" cried Mrs. Coulter. "God help you, poor thing! Your saying so is the greatest mark you have ever given of the contrary."

"Nay," said Hyppolita, "do not discredit me. To be serious, my folly was all assumed, I assure you. I am at least capable of judging between right and wrong; between good-nature and ill-nature; that I have long felt, though never before acknowledged, my dear uncle and aunt's kindness to me, and now take this opportunity of express-

ing to them my warmest gratitude and affection."

"Heyday!" exclaimed Coulter; "the girl talks as if she thought. Zounds! this is strange too. But no, it can't be. Harkee, little Hyp, how much do one and one make?"

"Two," replied Hyppolita: "an uncle and an aunt, whom I shall always respect and esteem."

"Very good, extremely pretty!" cried Coulter. "By crackins! I am altogether astonished. Let me see—one more question. What is the name of a dead sheep?"

"Mutton," answered Hyppolita, smiling.

"Right!" exclaimed Coulter.—"This is quite amazing. But let me

see. One more question, and it shall be a poser. What is the difference between a farm and an estate?"

"My dear uncle," answered she, "that is a point of knowledge, not of judgment. A person may be very capable of deciding between two things, if he understands them. A native of Otaheite may have capacity enough to leave the one, and sell the other, but he may possibly have never heard of either. You must not confound ignorance with incapacity; and therefore I object to your question, as unfair."

"Confound me, if I understand your distinctions," said Coulter; "but for that very reason I am inclined to think you wiser than ever I did; inasmuch as I could never yet fathom

the fine sayings of people, whom all the rest of the world reckoned great geniuses. Now, when you used to talk like a fool, I could understand you with all the ease in life."

"I am afraid," said Mrs. Coulter, "that the poor creature is only making an exchange from folly to madness. There is so much ingenuity in what she says, that I strongly suspect her of having got a disordered brain. Heaven bless her, and me too, if she has. I could endure a driveller, but I should be frightened to death at a lunatic."

"My dear aunt," said Hyppolita, "do not indulge in these chimeras. Believe me, when I tell you, that my idiotism was all *fictitious;* that I have as much common sense as most girls,

and that I had particular motives for assuming the semblance of folly, which, if you please, I will now relate to you."

She did so; but unfortunately mingled her tale (not very probable in itself to the homely ideas of her aunt and uncle) with so many moral and metaphysical observations which they could not see the drift of, that, when she had finished, she found them, Mrs. Coulter in particular, in a state of silent horror, and undisguised affright.

After a long pause, Dorothy beckoned her spouse to the window, where they held a long consultation together; after which, Coulter took up his hat, and went out, while Dorothy rang the bell, and desired a maid to remain in the room.

CHAPTER XX.

HYPPOLITA, rather astonished at these proceedings, asked her aunt why the girl was ordered to remain in the room.

"Sit quiet, that's a dear," answered Mrs. Coulter. "All is for the best, and I dare say no harm will happen."

"For goodness sake, what is the matter?" cried Hyppolita, quite alarmed at the watchful and apprehensive eye that Mrs. Coulter fixed on her, and still more at the mysterious words which accompanied that look.

"Will you go and lie a little on the

bed?" said Mrs. Coulter. "It will compose you after the fright."

"I require no rest," answered Hyppolita; "and, I assure you, felt far less terrified at the adventure I have just undergone, than at your present manner and conversation."

"Let us talk no more on the subject," said Mrs. Coulter. "Keep yourself calm. It is quite dreadful to see this change in you. But I trust in providence it will end well.—Oh, dear!"

"I conjure you," cried Hyppolita, "to explain to me the meaning of all this, or I shall run distracted."

"Distracted!" repeated Mrs. Coulter. "Ah, poor thing; distracted, sure enough."

"If you mean to say," replied

Hyppolita, "that I am not in my senses, I shall, at least, give you no further pretext for the supposition, by speaking; I shall be silent for the future."

She here ceased, nor was her aunt particularly anxious to continue the conversation.

They therefore sat in reciprocal silence for sometime, and at the end of an hour Coulter appeared, bringing with him a personage of most forbidding deportment, in black, who made his bow, sat down, without uttering a syllable, and began to stare at Hyppolita with the most determined and scrutinizing look.

"Well;—what do you think of her, doctor?" asked Coulter.

"At least," said Hyppolita, quite

provoked, "the gentleman has resolved that his opinion shall not be wrong for want of sufficient rudeness."

"That the young lady is as you say," replied the doctor.

"No doubt of it," added Coulter, in a suppressed tone. "It strikes me as a matter beyond all question, when an idiot begins to talk sense, it follows that she must be going mad."

"And ever since you left us," said Mrs. Coulter, also half whispering; "she has gazed frightfully with both her eyes, and talked to me in such an ill-humour, as I never knew her practise till now."

"I would not so much mind the glare of her eyes," said Coulter, still speaking low, but yet overheard by

Hyppolita, "'tis her beginning, all of a sudden, to talk so rationally, that proves to me her brain is turned. Upon my soul, doctor, it would shock you to hear the calmness, reasonableness, and collectedness of her speech, within the last hour."

"Certainly," said the doctor, "lunatics have a most extraordinary rationality on some subjects; in particular, when they know they are undergoing an examination upon the state of their mind."

"Pray, then," resumed Mrs. Coulter, "what would you advise us to do with her? Is she fit for a strait waistcoat yet?"

"May I beg to know first," asked the doctor, "what you will allow me

for taking care of her, besides her board and lodging?"

"Oh, as for that, doctor," answered Mrs. Coulter, "we shall not differ. The poor creature is immensely rich, an heiress, in fact; and as her property must now, of course, be put into the hands of trustees, no doubt you will receive ample remuneration for your trouble."

"Then," answered the doctor, "I do not hesitate to declare that the young lady is in a most dreadful state of mental derangement, and that I must take her home with me, without loss of time. In fact, only observe her face at this moment. It presents a strong picture of every horrible passion that can disfigure humanity."

Where was the wonder? The subject of their discussion had overheard it all, and sat thunderstruck, a living picture of horror, astonishment, fear, anxiety, disgust, and indignation.

"My coach is at the door," said the doctor: "we had better convey her to my madhouse at once."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Hyppolita, starting from her seat. "Do you dare, have you the baseness, the inhuman atrocity, to commit such an outrage? What is your proof of my derangement? That I talk sense; that my countenance is expressive of passions; as if it were possible for a girl in her reason to overhear your conversation, without feeling those emotions, which you assume as a proof of her

wanting reason. But I am foolish in thus giving way to an indignation which will only serve to confirm you in your opinion, if indeed that opinion be sincere. Thus much only I shall add.—Attempt to remove me hence, or to utter another injurious insinuation against me, and I shall apply to the law for redress. As for you, uncle, and you, aunt, I pardon you a mistake, which, I know, has arisen from your ignorance. But this man understands his profession too well to believe that my intellects are disordered. On him therefore all my anger rests, and he shall learn, full soon, that he cannot violate the laws of his country, by coercing the person of any individual, without suffering for his crime."

"Young lady," said the doctor, fully determined to enrage her to something more like madness, "I know the laws of the land as well as any maniac in it; and I see in your phrenzied manner, and nice choice of phrases, an indisputable proof that you are at once dangerous, ingenious, and bewildered. I owe it to my duty, both as a man and a mad doctor, to protect you from yourself and from others. I could not rest quietly on my pillow, if I lay down this night without having first placed you in a state of security, and guarded your good uncle and aunt from the attacks of a person with your spirit; and though you are delicately formed, you seem to enjoy a considerable power of muscle. However, do not let these accomplishments make you uneasy.

Be assured, I shall repress their exuberance, whenever I see it necessary,—at the same time I may say, without a boast, that you will ever find me as sparing of the waistcoat and of flagellation as the circumstances of the case will admit."

Hyppolita was not so unacquainted with the world as to fall into this snare. She saw in an instant that his object was to rouse all her anger; she therefore returned no answer to this harangue.

"There!" cried the doctor to Mr. and Mrs. Coulter. "There is the greatest and most dangerous symptom of all. You perceive her apathy, and her utter unconsciousness of her own impending fate. This torpor always

accompanies the disorder, in its last stage. Had she rushed at once into the fury; had she attempted my eyes, or stuck a pin in the point of my nose, there would still have been some hope for her: she might still have proved an amiable member of society: she might still have been the mother of a charming race of children. Now, nothing remains, but to make the remainder of her days as comfortable as possible. Recovery is hopeless. We must be content with tranquillity."

At this heart-rending declaration, poor Mrs. Coulter burst into tears, and the wretched uncle himself began sobbing like a great baby.

In the midst of the council, the door opened, and to Hyppolita's unspeak-

able delight, she beheld Morland. She jumped from her chair, and in an instant had seized his hand.

"Oh, you are doomed to relieve me from all my embarrassments!" she exclaimed.

"For heaven's sake! what has happened now?" asked Morland.

"A thing so shocking, and yet so ludicrous," cried she, "that I know not whether I am most inclined to cry or to laugh. In one word, I unfortunately began to talk common sense to my dear uncle and aunt, so they instantly set me down as crazed, and sent for a mad-doctor. There sits the gentleman, and if ever man deserved chastisement for wantonly sporting with the feelings of a female, and for basely attempting to

irritate her to a degree of madness necessary for his infamous purpose, that is the man."

Morland hardly waited for the conclusion of this speech, before he had sprung upon the doctor, collared him, swept his prostrate body along the carpet, and flung him, head foremost, down the stairs.

Coulter and his wife sat aghast. They thought that their niece's madness had communicated itself to Morland, and they expected every moment to be sent down stairs after the doctor.

However, they were soon set at ease on this point; for Morland sat quietly down, and begged to hear a more particular detail of the late incident. Coulter and his wife first told

their story. They animadverted with horror on the great change from idiotism to sound sense which had just taken place in Hyppolita: they stated their firm opinion that nothing but lunacy could have produced so rational a style of thinking, and concluded with conjuring him to hasten out and bring back the doctor.

This recital was interrupted only by the laughter of Morland; and after they had finished, he begged Hyppolita to give them the history of her plot, from first to last. This she did, and so effectually, that the good old couple began to alter their opinion of her altogether, and to believe that persons may sometimes talk sense without being out of their senses.

Morland now declared the state of his affections with regard to his mistress, and requested they would confirm his pretensions by their approbation. Indeed, they did not require much intreaty. Their only objection was his want of property; but as Hypolita was, in fact, her own mistress; and as they felt a most cordial partiality towards Morland, they made not the slightest opposition. The lovers were, therefore, as happy as lovers could be under the full conviction of friends' consent, and of all hinderance, and molestation being removed.

Preliminaries being thus adjusted, Morland proceeded to inform them that Lord Catson had again made his appearance in town, where, it seems,

he intended to remain a very short period, having come for some mysterious purpose. His servant, who (like all servants, imitated his master's politics) was perfectly ready to betray him for the sake of a guinea or two, promised to let him know where he was to be found in the evening; and Morland was determined to take some police officers with him, and have him arrested as a swindler. He had also arranged matters for the seizure of the Marquis of Veneric, Brasslace, Sir Felicitous Rag, and Colonel Hawker, all of whom he had discovered were implicated in the conspiracy to carry off Hyppolita.

Hyppolita however protested strongly against the measure. She wished

not to have her name brought before the public at all, and gave it as her opinion, that her aunt would act wisely in not permitting any notice to be taken of the affair with Lord Catson.

After much discussion on this subject, it was finally determined that no legal steps should be taken; but to this Morland never would have consented, had he not, in the course of conversation, hit upon a plan of retaliation which should embrace the whole of the gang, who, from the beginning, had annoyed Hyppolita. His head teeming with this project, he took a hasty leave in order to put it into execution, and our readers shall soon have an opportunity of learning the result.

CHAPTER XXI.

PREVIOUS to proceeding farther, we think it necessary to give our readers an outline of a most celebrated personage who has long figured on the pugilistic stage, and we might also add, in the fashionable world, inasmuch as he lives much among the great, and is often the most respectable character at their entertainments. We speak of Mr. Gymnast, professor of the noble science of defence. This gigantic personage stands at the head of his profession. Born with muscular powers of the very first magnitude, he soon

distinguished himself by an easy victory over the great Mendoza. Like Wellington, he has never been conquered, at least not by mankind. But a woman, we must all allow, is irresistible; and Mr. Gymnast, like a mere mortal, yielded his heart a prize, and married. The lady was rich; and, as report states, made it a part of the marriage articles that he should never again fight a pitched battle. He, therefore, since he could not indulge himself in this amusement, kindly resolved to indulge others; so set up an academy for the art, took commodious apartments, and ever since has led the pugilistic *ton*. All the young nobility flock to his standard; and, after a few months, find, with great delight,

that they are matches for any drayman in town. We believe, indeed, that he deserves all the patronage he has acquired; for his conduct and deportment are those of a gentleman. He never commits those excesses which disgrace the rest of his fraternity, and he is really a most entertaining companion. The consequence is, that he drinks as much claret and champagne at private houses as his brethren do beer and gin at public ones. If two of the fancy wish for a match of black and blue between a couple of noted bruisers, Gymnast is instantly invited to arrange the affair. He gets the purse made up, appoints the field of battle, and on the day of exhibition presides there, as king and arbiter, whose title of pre-eminence none presumes to dispute.

A sort of circular letter, purporting to come from this personage, was received on the day following Morland's last visit at Long's, by the Marquis of Veneric, Lord Catson, Captain Brasslace, Sir Felicitous Rag, Colonel Hawker, Lord Yardlip, and other characters who had distinguished themselves as persecutors of the *fair idiot*. The letter ran thus:

"SIR,

"I have to acquaint you that two noblemen, whose names I am enjoined not to disclose, have resolved upon proving their comparative prowess in a boxing match. They have for some time been in training; but as they do not wish to exhibit themselves before an indiscriminate assemblage,

and at the same time are anxious to have a certain number of respectable persons present, who may give a just and impartial account of the contest, they have left the choice of twelve to me.

"I therefore do myself the honour to inform you, that this desperate encounter (for I have reason to believe that it will be most desperate) will take place this night, at twelve o'clock, in the small house which lies on the left of Epping Forest, near the little lane. It is to be fought by torch-light.

"Nothing farther remains for me to say, but that the utmost secrecy is expected. If the affair takes wind, officers will probably be sent to pre-

vent it; and, on the other hand, if it should become so public as to draw down any other spectators than those specifically selected, it will not take place at all.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

MILO GYMNAST."

The several persons to whom this notice was sent, not for one moment doubting its authenticity, flew to give orders for their carriages, gigs, curricles, blood-horses, &c. &c. to be got ready. Each was full of the important secret, even almost to bursting; but as the consequences of disclosure would prove so fatal to the fun, they kept their

tongues in durance vile, till the moment came for setting off to the forest.

That tedious moment having at length arrived on leaden wings, the chosen few departed from town, and reached the border of the forest before the appointed hour.

With some difficulty they found the house described in Gymnast's letter. It was an old cottage. Lord Catson arrived there first. On groping his way into it through the door, which lay open, he perceived a light in a little parlour on the left of the hall. He therefore walked, and beheld a damp unfurnished room, lighted by two small candles, and a couple of mean-looking men employed in sanding the floor. Eight or ten flambeaux lay in a bundle

at one corner of the room, and there was a deal table in another. This constituted the whole of its embellishments.

"What, the devil!" cried Lord Catson, "is it here they are to box?"

"I believe so, Sir," answered one of the men, "because 'tis this room we were ordered to prepare."

"But who are the persons that have made the match?" asked his lordship.

"Can't tell, Sir," answered the man.

"Who desired you to make these preparations?" again enquired his lordship.

"Can't tell, Sir," answered the man once more.

Lord Yardlip now made his appearance, and shook hands with his friend.

"I perceive," said he, "that you are one of the initiated. You got a letter from Gymnast, of course."

"Certainly," answered Lord Catson; "he always sends me a despatch on such occasions."

This, by the way, was a bounce; for Mr. Gymnast held no communication with him, and was too solicitous about his own character to wish for any such honour.

"'Tis a confounded odd affair," observed Lord Yardlip. "Do you know who the parties are?"

"Not I, faith!" answered Lord Catson; "but it appears to be a most determined business."

And now Sir Felicitous arrived.

"Ha! Sir Felicitous!" exclaimed Lords Catson and Yardlip.

"Ha! my boys!" exclaimed the baronet.

Then came—"Ha! Veneric!" then, "Ha! Brasslace!" then, "Ha! Hawker!" and so on, "ha! ha! ha!" till all the party were assembled.

Meanwhile, the two men, having finished their sanding job, left the house; and a conversation, such as generally pervades a circle of bloods and rakes, went round. They talked of their hunters, and each had the finest in England. They talked of their mistresses, and of their points, and of their horse's points, and seemed to consider their mistresses next in value

to their racers. They discussed sundry knotty questions, relative to the best mode of docking, and cropping, and bleeding, and physicking; and thence diverged to dogs, billiards, Carter and Crib, hazard, Dewy Duck, Stultz, Etren, and punch-water. But our documents do not inform us that any remarks were made upon such topics as history, geography, metaphysics, morals, or religion. These idle subjects they left to younger sons, clergymen, law students, gouty baronets, and men who wear worsted stockings.

After some time, however, they began to wonder that none of the combatants and their friends had yet arrived. It was now half past twelve o'clock; and the time specified in the

letter was twelve precisely. The two candles, which stood on the table, were burnt to the brass's edge, nor did any one appear at hand to replenish them.

At length, they determined to sally forth, and see who was waiting in the other rooms, and to reconnoitre the premises. But when for this purpose they attempted to open the room-door, to their utter astonishment, they found it locked. They pulled, they thumped, they bawled, they swore.—All in vain. Here was a mystery! Here was a poser! They looked one at the other for some time, and might have looked still longer, had not the two candles, now reduced to the last extremity, expired at the same moment. What was to be done now? They

groped their way to the window, but could not raise it. They broke the glass, and found that the outside was secured with shutters and bars.

"We have been decoyed here by robbers," said Colonel Hawker, in faint accents, "and shall get murdered."

"Let us give a devil of a view hollow all together," said Sir Felicitous, "and perhaps we shall make our servants at the end of the lane hear us."

This being a bright idea, the prisoners put it into immediate execution; and sent forth such a volley of lungs, as might reasonably have hoped to awaken the dead in a country church-yard, that lay about half a mile distant. Yet, still neither servants nor ghosts tapped at the door, to know

their pleasure. It was plain, that some infernal scheme was in agitation about them, and for half an hour they remained in a state of terror, which precluded all rational consultation.

"D—n my heart!" exclaimed Lord Yardlip, at last. — "There is some b——d water, or devilish inundation of some kind or other, pouring down upon me from the ceiling."

"Zounds!" cried the Marquis of Veneric, "there is a dribbling on my head too."

"By Heaven!" shouted Colonel Hawker, "I'm half drowned by a squirt."

"A squirt!" exclaimed Sir Felicitous; "'tis a water-spout that is attacking me."

"And me too," echoed Captain Brasslace. "It has got down my bosom into my breeches already!"

"By the lord!" cried Lord Catson, "'tis up to my ankles! I tell you we shall be drowned to a man, and I can no more swim, than I can waltz!"

Each of the party now began to run about, and shift their quarters, in search of a dry spot. They jostled, knocked their heads bolt against each other, tumbled, got up, crouched in corners, held their hands to their faces, and bawled stoutly. It appeared as if the ceiling had been perforated with holes, and that entire tubs of water were precipitating through them. The cataracts increased: there was no nook, no recess, no dear, snug, nice

little corner to protect one of the sufferers. Thump! thump! thump! they went at the door—at every thump, a fresh inundation. The door seemed the most drowning spot of the whole room. The water increased. It rose to their knees. The prospect was dreadful. No family of rats, swimming for their existence, could feel more delicately distressed.

"Who are you? What have we done to you? Speak! Do you mean to drown us? Who are you, I say?" was the simultaneous and reiterated cry of all. But the water-king above remained silent, as that part of his empire which they call a puddle.

By degrees, the deluge subsided, and they had the satisfaction of finding

that they were only up to their middles. They could likewise perceive that the lake in which they stood was becoming more and more shallow every moment, in consequence, as they concluded, of some outlet or other in the wall, or at the bottom of the door.

They remained for some time longer in that state of pleasing tranquillity which every one feels at having just escaped from the jaws of death; and once more they began to talk in a low voice, and consult upon the best means of escape.

"Don't you fancy you feel a sort of very light dust, something like hair-powder, or flour, falling all over you?" enquired Lord Catson of his neighbour, in a voice of renewed horror.

"Clearly! oh, most clearly!" exclaimed Sir Felicitous, "'tis peppering me at a devil of a rate!"

"What confounded pulverization is this getting into my mouth and nostrils?" cried Colonel Hawker.

"I'll be shot if it an't brick-dust," said Lord Yardlip.

"Or sea sand," said Brasslace.

"Do they take us for the flags of a farmer's floor," cried Lord Yardlip, "that they wash us first and sand us afterwards."

"Done for a thousand, 'tis flour!" exclaimed Lord Catson.

In this way they continued to amuse themselves, while a most copious shower of minute dust fell upon their heads. They began now to find that

no very serious mischief was intended them, and consequently their spirits rose. They joked joyously; called on their persecutors over head to pour down a hogshead of claret on them: now and then they made attempts at the door and windows, but without any effect; and, in a word, here they remained till the morning broke, vainly endeavouring at intervals to conjecture who the wicked sorcerer could be that had thus spirited them into that infernal purgatory.

They could perceive the dawn of morning through the crevices of the shutters, and the key-hole of the door. Again, therefore, the door became an object of their scrutiny. But how great was their joy, when on a sudden

they heard the sound of approaching footsteps! They shouted aloud. Voices answered from outside, asking them who was there, and what they wanted. They begged, for mercy's sake, to have the door burst open, and accordingly, in a few minutes, they had the pleasure of seeing it begin to give way. The next moment in it flew, and broad day glared upon their dazzled eyeballs.

Out they rushed tumultuously, and an expression of horror and amazement burst from the voices of seven or eight persons on the outside, whom, as soon as the sudden flash of light enabled them to see, they recognized to be some of their own most intimate friends. In fact, they were no other

than Lord Leander, the Earl of Rat-eater, Lord Octave, Captain Adon, Sir John Wheeler, &c.

The prisoners looked at them with the utmost indignation, while they still roared in convulsions of laughter.

"Why, how now, you dogs!" cried Lord Yardlip: "how dared you put this scurvy trick upon us?"

"Who the plague are you all?" cried the spectators, as soon as their fit of laughter had somewaht subsided.

"You know us well enough," answered Sir Felicitous, "and shall suffer for your insolence."

"Consume me! if I know one man among you," said Lord Octave, "if indeed you be men at all; for, judging by your appearance, you are nothing less than devils."

His lordship, it must be confessed, was almost warranted in his supposition; for never did such a diabolical looking set issue from any habitation before—at least, in this world. They were all, from head to foot, as black as lamp-black and water could make them. Not a feature in their faces was distinguishable, and they were besides so dappled with incrustations of flour, that they looked like a set of sweeps and millers, who had made each other harlequin masks and jackets out of their respective commodities, meal and soot.

"I tell you what, my Lords Octave, and Leander, and Rat-eater, and the rest of you," cried Lord Yardlip, "you may call us devils, if you please, but before long, you shall find that we are men."

"What men?" asked Lord Rat-eater, "for Beelzebub himself could never know you under those d——d smutty masks."

"I will repeat the catalogue to you," replied Lord Yardlip, "and then we shall proceed to business."

His lordship accordingly ran through the whole list of names. Never was astonishment greater than that of the spectators; and they hastened to exculpate themselves forthwith, against the charge of having planned the plot. They showed circular letters which each of them had received, much of the same import as those signed by Gymnast, but naming seven o'clock in the morning as the appointed hour of rendezvous. Their accusers, there-

fore, acquitted them fully of all participation in the business, nor could the united conjectures of the party discover any possible clue to the real perpetrators.

They now consulted what was best to be done. Nothing appeared feasible but for the sooty tribe to walk in a body to the neighbouring town, procure carriages there, and make the best of their way to London; for a change of dress it was impossible to get elsewhere. Neither had their friends more than two gigs amongst them, and most had ridden their own horses. As for the vehicles which had brought the smuts down, they had disappeared altogether, by means of a supplementary stratagem.

Accordingly, this singular looking party of black-guards set out on their march, two by two, and arrived at Epping. We shall not attempt to describe the dreadful confusion which their appearance, both on the road and in the town, excited—how many milk maids dropped speechless—how many little boys screamed like so many jacks—or how many children, of four years old or under, fell into fits. Suffice it to say, that by the patronage of their liberators, who assured the people that these odd figures were of the first families and fortunes, who, by some unaccountable circumstance, were just then labouring under a dreadful phænomenon, carriages and horses were procured, their faces were washed, and off they set to London.

Never, by any investigation, were they able to detect the machinator of their mishap. Morland had laid his plan so admirably, having chosen a retired and uninhabited house for the scene of his operations, and entrusted only two old and tried followers of his family with the secret, that nothing but some unlucky cross-play could have brought it to light.

With this incident we shall dismiss all the characters who have figured through these pages ;—happy for most of them, if they never suffer severer mortifications, and if their follies and their crimes shall draw down upon them hereafter the vengeance of no sharper pen than we have used. While they act only as their own enemies, we can pity them, and be silent. But

when we see them inveigling others into their snares; rendering the weak, wicked; the wealthy, poor; and the innocent, flagitious; we should feel ourselves in some measure parties to their atrocity, if we did not endeavour to unmask them.

As we hate long windings-up, or, (to use a more fashionable phrase) *denouements*, we shall now briefly state, that in a week after this ludicrous hoax, Morland and his Hyppolita became man and wife. Immediately after the ceremony, accompanied by the Coulters, they set off for the old gentleman's seat. But, as they have not since been heard of, and as, in fact, the honey-moon is not yet expired, we cannot take upon us to say whether

they are mutually pleased with their matrimonial bargain;—whether they have yet begun to see faults in each other, or (what generally happens after that discovery is made) whether they have begun, gently first, to hint all these faults; afterwards to state them more candidly and cordially, and last of all, to create in each other, by this extreme candour and cordiality, ten thousand faults and foibles, which they had never possessed before.

THE END.

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